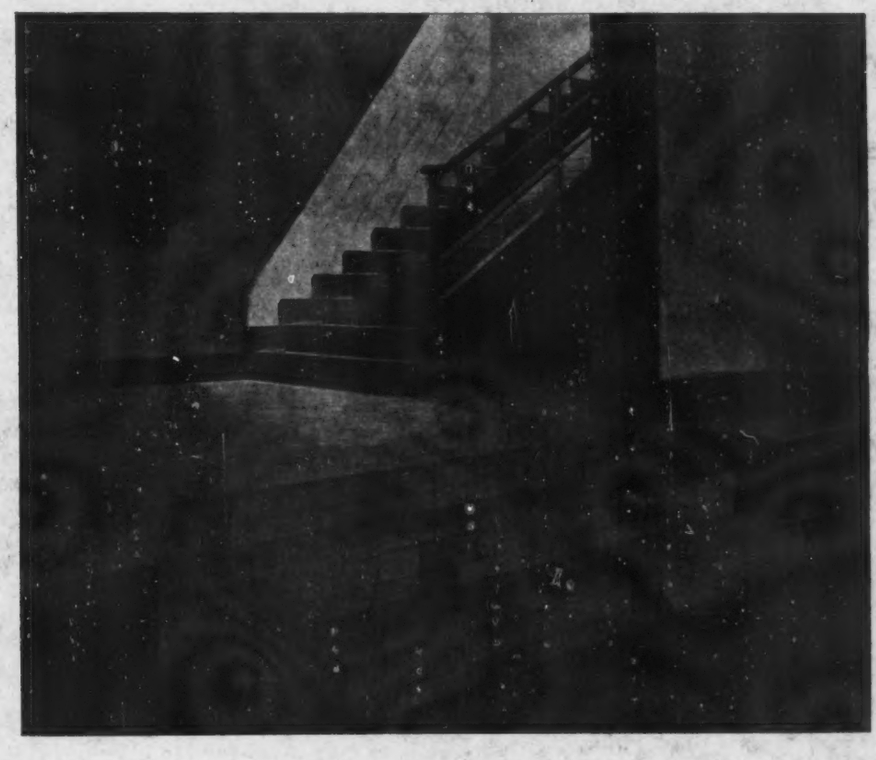
THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

A Magazine of Architecture & Decoration



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THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

A Magazine of Architecture & Decoration

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SIR IAN MACALISTER
Drawn for *The Architectural Review* by Cecil Waller
PLATE i *July* 1934

Sir Ian MacAlister

By Sydney D. Kitson

THE duties imposed upon Thomas Leverton Donaldson, the first Honorary Secretary of the R.I.B.A., were of a light and leisurely nature. Under their burden, though a man of wide interests and preoccupations, he was still able to fill the rôles of scholar, architect and Professor of Architecture at University College, London. In 1864, thirty years after the founding of the Institute, the promotion of Donaldson from the post of Honorary Secretary to that of President marked a period of development in the activities of the R.I.B.A. which warranted the appointment of a paid secretary. The choice of a candidate for this new post, in accordance with the bye-laws, was then restricted to Fellows of the Institute. Charles Locke Eastlake, the nephew and namesake of the President of the Royal Academy and Director of the National Gallery, was the first holder of this new office. He employed his ample leisure in writing books, the best known of which is *The History of the Gothic Revival*. In 1877 Eastlake was made Keeper of the National Gallery by Disraeli, and another architect, W. H. White, took his place. For eighteen years Mr. White combined the duties of his office with a considerable architectural practice ; but on his retirement in 1896 it was decided that the work of the Institute then required the whole-time services of its Secretary. The bye-law which required that the post should be held by an architect was rescinded and W. J. Locke, afterwards known as a distinguished novelist, became the first lay secretary of the Institute. Even now the new official's duties were not sufficiently exacting to prevent his writing novels which became, in succession, increasingly popular.

At the end of ten years Locke felt that his literary and financial position was so assured as to allow him to give up his secretarial post at the Institute ; and so in 1908—twenty-six years ago—the Council sought for a new Secretary. Its choice fell upon a young man called Ian MacAlister, who at once set out to make his job a full-time one in reality as well as in name. It so happened that when MacAlister was appointed a new carpet was laid down on the floor of the ante-room to his office. That carpet is now the threadbare ghost of its former self ; it is also a silent testimony to the endless succession of callers, architects in search of advice, architects from overseas assured of a welcome at their headquarters, promoters of competitions, and a whole host of people who have come for information on all matters concerned with the architectural profession. These callers have always been received with uniform consideration by a man who has the gift of concentration on the matter in hand and a long memory both for facts and faces. MacAlister has had no time to write novels, nor even short romances, during his twenty-six years' tenure of office. Perhaps, when the time for his retirement comes, he may be induced to write his autobiography. Such a book would be an intimate and informed history of architecture in his own time.

Meanwhile, in view of the honour which has been so recently bestowed upon him by the King, it is fitting to put on record a few facts about the career of Sir Ian MacAlister. He comes of a sturdy and intelligent Scottish stock from the shores of Loch Fyne. His father was John MacAlister, who was afterwards knighted for his services as Secretary of the Royal Society of Medicine ; and his uncle was Sir Donald MacAlister, the veteran Chancellor of the University of Glasgow, who died a short while ago. Ian MacAlister was born at Liverpool in 1878, where his father was at that time a librarian. A similar appointment in Leeds took the family there. When Sir John became associated with the work of the Society of Medicine and moved to London he sent his son to St. Paul's School, where that great high master, F. W. Walker, was training a bright company of scholars who afterwards won distinction at the universities and in the world outside. From St. Paul's School MacAlister went to Merton College, Oxford, with an Exhibition in Modern History. But once at Oxford the spirit of the place persuaded him to desert history for classics and he obtained second class honours in his Greats examination.

On going down from Oxford he became aide-de-camp and secretary to the Earl of Dundonald, who was then G.O.C. of the Canadian Army. MacAlister spent a couple of years in Canada and the experience which he gained there was of value to him afterwards in his sympathetic dealings with Allied Societies overseas. When he returned to England his next rôle was that of tutor to the present Lord Grimthorpe, the great-nephew of the restorer of St. Albans Abbey. Afterwards, he had some experience as a journalist. Then came the offer of the post of Secretary to the R.I.B.A.

If it be true that the Institute has helped in the making of MacAlister, the converse is equally true that MacAlister has helped in the making of the Institute. He came there as the servant of what was virtually a London institution ; he is now the servant of a society whose branches are spread throughout the British Empire. In 1908 there were twenty-nine architectural societies in alliance with the parent body ; there are now one hundred. MacAlister has, therefore, on more than seventy occasions assisted either as a skilful nurse at the birth of new societies or as an experienced " best man " when an existing society has been married to the Institute. During the same period the membership of the R.I.B.A. has been quadrupled and its income has increased in like ratio. MacAlister has not only kept abreast of this movement, but he has been actually the mainspring of it. It is no longer possible for a Secretary of the Institute to write another *Beloved Vagabond* in his spare time. He has none.

The work entailed in the amalgamation of the Society of Architects with the Institute was very great, and this task fell largely upon the shoulders of MacAlister. This fusion of the two societies carried with it the obligation to press forward the movement for the legal registration of architects. Here again the burden which devolved upon the Secretary was heavy and difficult. It was spread over eight years and the anxieties and disappointments were many. But, perhaps, the greatest permanent achievement of these twenty-six years has been the creation and development of the whole system of architectural education as it now exists. This has been done by team work and Sir Ian has been fortunate in the men who have been associated with him in building up this solid fabric—patiently, serenely and without controversy. Chairmen of the Board of Education come and go, but MacAlister remains as a permanent elder statesman, with all the knowledge and experience which time and continuity alone can give.

Sir Ian has been the friend and confidante of thirteen presidents, the first of whom was Sir Ernest George. During the presidency of Paul Waterhouse it became customary for the President to attend the annual dinners and meetings of the Allied Societies, wherever and whenever it was possible to do so. MacAlister invariably accompanies his chief, and this interchange of views between the Provinces and Headquarters has made for unification and understanding. On such occasions Sir Ian has, when he can be induced to speak, proved himself to be a good after-dinner orator, but he is an even better listener. By sympathetic listening and by an unselfish and far-seeing devotion to the interests of the R.I.B.A. he has achieved an enviable position—that of a friend of every member of the Institute.

The New Medici

By Cyril Connolly

By Hans Feibusch

THE Exhibition of Pictures in Advertizing by Shell-Mex and B.P., Ltd., was held last month at the New Burlington Gallery. It would seem unusual at first sight to devote so much space to what appears to be a purely commercial function, but this exhibition in reality is much more significant, for it marks the beginning of a new era in the relations of creative modern art and big business. Apart from the interest of the paintings themselves, it raises questions of the greatest importance and problems of the greatest difficulty. They are of two kinds and arise from the relation of artist to patron and patron to public. To begin with, notice how the phrase " pictures in advertising " and not " posters " is used. This illustrates the fundamental idea of the new advertising, to give the artist a free hand.

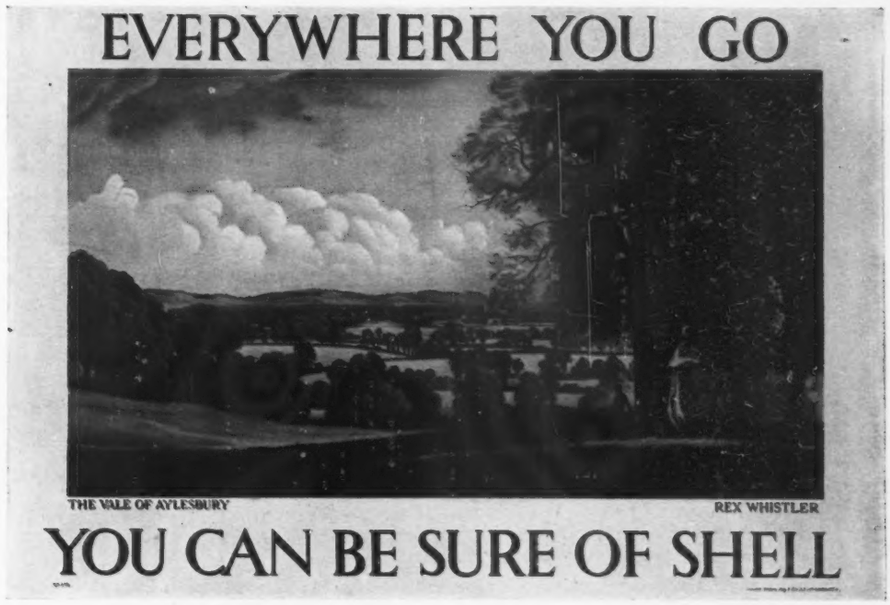
" Commercial art " is a misleading term. All art that is commissioned is commercial. Only a few painters who paint entirely for themselves, whose only aim is to perpetuate the abstractions of their imagination, do not paint for money. To use the phrase " commercial art " as a term of depreciation is the equivalent of referring to all poetry written for a publisher as " commercial literature." But people do not realize this, and the prejudice has arisen that posters by good artists are the base and slick betrayal of high standards, and the natural expression of their own cupidity when executed by bad ones. The poster artist succeeds from a peculiar vulgar touch. How different from the real artist, who decorates a suburban church, or the Tudor sun-lounge of a great liner! And how different from the old masters, who worked for monasteries and guilds and the courts of princes! Perhaps some great lady inspired them, and there was passion in their pigment! But these sources of employment have largely dried up: monasteries are not rich, princes are not artistic; guilds, or rather guild-halls, reject more than they accept, and great ladies are too busy selling their own faces, endorsing where their ancestors endowed. The founts of patronage now flow from business houses, and none of these merchant princes have realized their responsibilities more than Shell. Looking at this exhibition one might consider them as setting out to be the Medici of our time, with Mr. Beddington, whose judgment it represents, as Lorenzo.

This exhibition represents a double triumph for him, since it embodies not only his faith in modern artists, but also in the modern public. This public, in advertising, is very much of an unknown quantity, and much of the flashiness of posters is due to the very cynical estimate which manufacturers hold of it. Yet there is no reason why the public should prefer bad pictures to good. The analogy with other arts is not a close one. Both literature and music, for instance, if the best is to be distinguished from the worst there, demand a certain level of education and a natural predilection for them. Architecture, as we see it in the buildings of today, expresses the bad taste of the people who put them up—not of those who walk outside them. But there is no reason why anyone with two eyes should not enjoy a good picture; the public of the National Gallery is not as specialized as that of the British Museum reading-room. We only assume that they do not like good pictures because that is the Royal Academy's assumption.

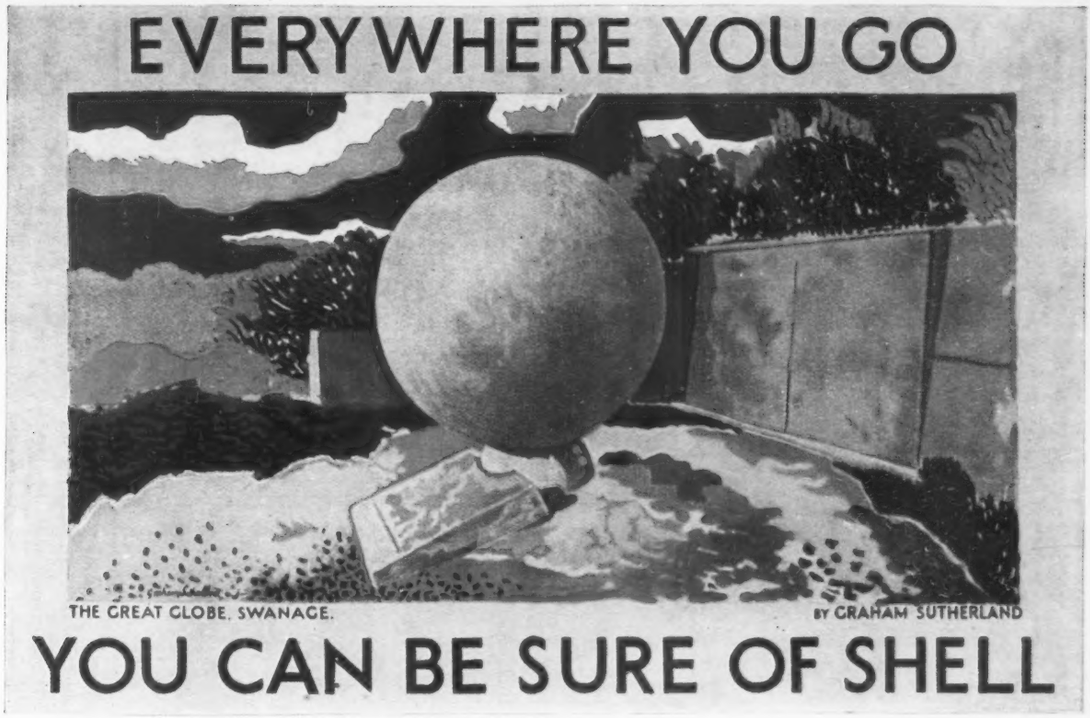
What is more remarkable still is that, having decided that for the public the best was good enough, Shell should find it good advertising to provide it for them. What can really be the result on sales of a poster by Sickert for example, of the darkest side of Camden Town, and one of Academy Highland cattle? The answers are that if one could ever find out, it would probably be very little. The little difference there is, however, is immensely important, for in the long run a general reputation for quality reflects on an article from the method in which it is advertised. The Highland cattle might please more easily, but the small minority who would laugh at them would eventually poison the firm's self-respect. The disapproval of people of taste is the pea in the mattress of the spoilt princess of modern big business. She may appear to snore as comfortably as ever, but sooner or later she groans in her sleep.

This advertising by association of ideas is particularly apparent in the series " Artists, archæologists, architects, etc., prefer Shell," where the emblems of distinction, the insignia of specialization in each art suggest a corresponding excellence, just as intricate, in the product. " Duchesses prefer Shell " would have had a more spectacular effect, but the appeal to professional men emphasizes a more reliable opinion.

More admirable than commissioning the modern artist to give the public what he wants is the sacrifice to the eventual public good which the Company have made in arranging the display. The posters in question are only visible on the travelling Shell vans and on the Underground. Shell has practically withdrawn all its advertising from the open road and even from the petrol station. There are some three thousand of these vans travelling the country, and naturally one cannot motor very far without seeing them—but when one thinks of the cardboard cows, the sham bicycles, the little liver pills which are entrenched in every meadow, it must be apparent that Shell has abandoned a profitable advantage. Such a renunciation is valueless unless every other firm makes it. But the psychology is that of the disarmament conference. Though the countryside will not be preserved till hoardings are as illegal as bombing planes, by making the first step the Company has made it easier for others, and incidentally won the respect of those who, forced to behold the progress of rural advertising, become more familiar with the names of the makers than they ever will be with their products. And in admitting the responsibility of big business to the land which makes it big, the Company admit a principle which is now being so bloodily disputed in America, which is occasioning so much bitterness in Ireland, where the absentee capitalist is replacing the absentee landlord, and which is far from being perceived by those other powers who rule us, who drive pylons over the Downs and plant red flags on Lulworth Cove.



Amongst the more encouraging signs of the times is what may be called the awakened conscience of big business. Those who draw great profit from their countrymen are beginning to realize that they have responsibilities towards their countrymen too—responsibilities which are not by any means completed by the mere exchange of "service" for pay. Of the major organizations which have set a really great standard, two stand out head and shoulders above the others: the Underground Railway, and Shell. At various times we have dealt with the Underground. In this article, we deal with the activities—the civilizing activities—of Shell.



By E. McKnight Kauffer

PLATE iii

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July 1934

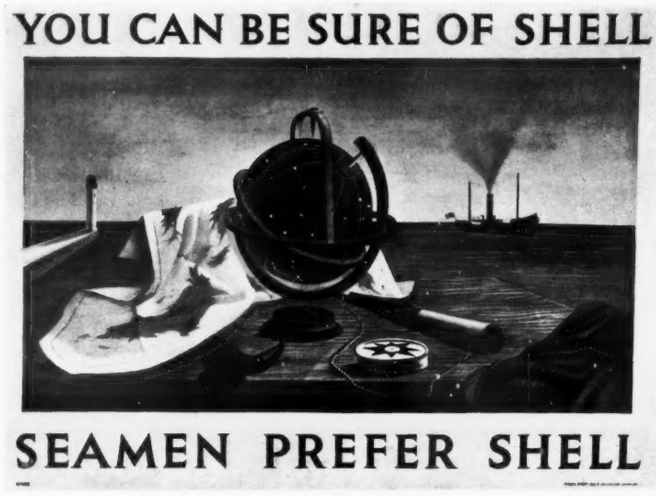
By E. McKnight Kauffer

By E. McKnight Kauffer

The pictures exhibited are of two kinds: landscapes, and a series of trade posters which have to carry a number of technical terms in their advertising matter. These, of necessity, must be rather striking and flashy, but it must be remembered that all such posters are ephemeral. They have a life of a few weeks at most, and, like dragonflies, they sport a little before their gaudiness has a chance to stale. This explains the rather unfair criticism levelled at certain painters, for example Gauguin: "He is only a poster-artist," which is just a way of expressing another popular phrase of art criticism: "I must say I shouldn't care to live with it." Actually living with a picture is a very odd idea. If pictures were circulated as they should be, the poster variety would strike a daring note of colour in the drabness of English good taste. We do not live with pictures unless they are so inoffensive ("restful") as to be practically invisible—etchings serve this purpose completely—and when we think we do, it is because, after a month, we occasionally see them again when we show them to a friend. A civilized person should prop up a new picture in front of his dinner for a few days, and when he is tired of it place it where it can be referred to, like a new book. If this should happen and there were picture-libraries, the distinctions between the noisy, facile poster and the subtle, permeating, dun-coloured, penal servitude composition would disappear.

The landscapes come first. They are not the work of one school of artists but of several, and they at once stand out from the ordinary travel poster by their new treatment. They do not represent historic beauty spots as chosen by Baedeker, nor are they reproduced either with the accuracy of a camera or the sentimentality of the school of the Academy and Mr. Raphael Tuck. They advertise because they make one want to see the originals, and to see them involves a car. But the fortunes of petrol depend on the caprice of wind and rain; when the sun shines they prosper, when it sets they fall. These pictures can only insinuate in static lives the idea of change. That they so adequately succeed is because these landscapes are not chosen for what you can do to them when you get there; for the sports and sentimental wallows they offer. There are no purple sunsets over purple heather, no long sands with safe bathing, no golf course and no woodland ride—only the gaiety and life, the rhythms and affinities inherent in the countryside and which are revealed to painters; structural effects of earth and cloud which communicate an exhilaration which is not egoistic, and of which, in consequence, one does not tire.

If people could be trained to see the countryside with detachment, not as something romantic and literary (it is from books that we learn to appreciate waterfalls, Snowdon, Dartmoor and the Lake District), nor as something to be jumped over or knocked about, but as the quarry of artistic forms, something instinct with visual pleasure, they would save themselves half the worries of imperfect possession, and all the expense. The huge comic embodiment of this attitude is Frank Dobson's Giant of Cerne Abbas, whose might, seen across the wide downs, is partly obscured by floating cloud-shadows. The strength of the hills is his also. Graham Sutherland's Globe at Swanage (compare it with the photographs in railway carriages) is another picture which communicates the technical appreciation of the artist for an arrangement of masses. So does his Oast-



By Tristan Hillier

houses, near Leeds Castle. Other pictures show a geometrical satisfaction with planes. Such are Paul Nash's beautiful Rye Marshes, and Ainsworth's unusual Gordale Scar. Kauffer's two landscapes show a harsh and original treatment of two hackneyed and sentimental subjects, Bodiam Castle and the New Forest. Here again both awake emotion in those who see them, yet nothing, in the guide book sense, invites. Bodiam, without water-lilies, lies in austere moonlight, and the New Forest is a scene of wintry desolation. Cathleen Mann's West Wycombe is an architectural inspiration, and Steggle's picture of the Thames at Cookham a severe study of the English summer at its grayest. The river does not tempt us to use it, but we feel exhilarated by seeing what it really looks like. Bartlett's Entrance to Douglas is a seascape which one may contrast with the more reflective and longshoreman treatment in Hillier's Seamen Prefer Shell. Cedric Morres's Gardeners in the same series is a triumph of reproduction, for it contains fourteen colours. Rex Whistler's Vale of Aylesbury is particularly interesting, not only because he proves that he is capable of work which is not meretricious, but because he shows that a piece of straightforward eighteenth-century landscape painting reminiscent of the background in an early Stubbs can still prove the most authentic approach to English scenery. The moral of the landscapes here shown is that it is not the awe-inspiring or exceptional which now seems important, but what is most cheerful and genuine in our countryside —England is merry again—farewell romantic caves and peaks, welcome the bracing glories of our clouds, the cirrhus and the cumulus, and the cold pastoral of the chalk.

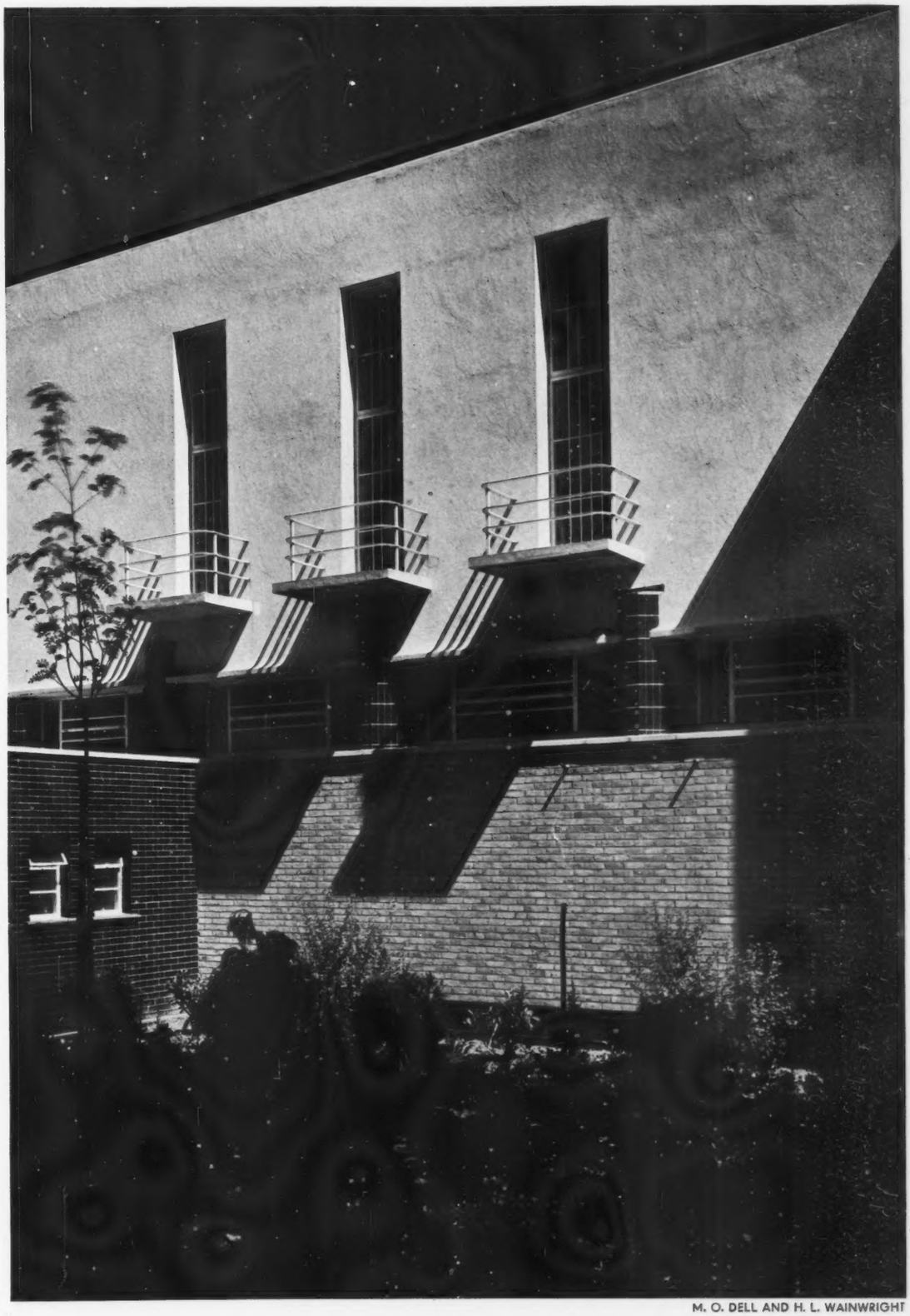
In the other series Armstrong's "Artists," and the "Architects prefer Shell" by Feibusch (who is a German expatriate) are modern pictures in which the influence of Picasso and Chirico can be detected. "Architects," in particular, shows a praiseworthy belief in the intelligence of the world at-which-one-advertises.

In the realm of the trade-poster Kauffer and Hans Schleger (Zéro) reign supreme. Here other difficulties arise, questions of typography, of presenting phrases like "B.P. Ethyl anti-knock" in a satisfactory manner.

The remainder of the exhibition consists of booklets, press-advertisements and showcards by various artists. The booklet on the use of petroleum in chicken-farming is the only piece of advertising to show a direct sales return. That on the contamination of English rivers, and the way to avoid it, is a lesser-known contribution to Shell's care of the countryside. Of the small sketches those by Banting and Higgins are naive without being artificial. Their humour is humour of line and does not die on one like that which is facetious and verbal. The larger witticisms, for example the Loch Ness Monstrosities, wear particularly badly. One would think it possible also to do without "You can be sure of Shell" by now—a landscape poster seen on a Shell van would be more suggestive if simply headed "Everywhere you go." There is also a collection of unpublished drawings where the public may try out their taste in judgment. Here it may be mentioned that it is often the artist who has let down the advertiser, having a much lower opinion than his employer of what was wanted. This is fatal, for those who write down to the public write badly and those who try to educate them up are dull.

Visitors to this exhibition, which incidentally was opened by Mr. Kenneth Clark, who also supervized the hanging, left it with a renewed belief in the power of good taste to triumph over bad, of merchant princes to be intelligent patrons, even though this belief rest only on the exertions of a few men, who, besides respecting the integrity of the artist, which many do, have also put their trust in the unrespected public.

A MASONIC LODGE IN ESSEX



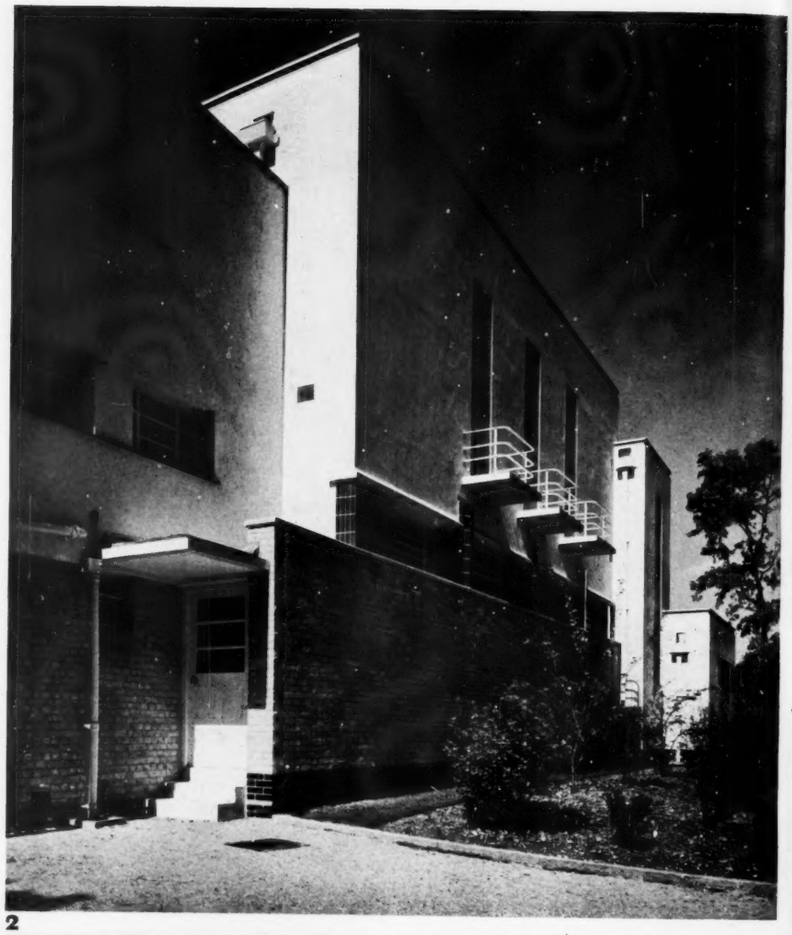
M. O. DELL AND H. L. WAINWRIGHT

1. A view from the garden of the central feature, showing the vertical windows to the dining hall and, below, the horizontal windows to the Temple. The dado is in yellow coloured and black glazed bricks. The upper walls are in cream rendering and the piers in blue tiles. The associated architects for the building were Sir John Burnet, Tait and Lorne *and* Douglas G. Armstrong.

A MASONIC LODGE

Howard Hall—the Temple of St. Mary Lodge—is situated in the Causeway, Bocking, on the outskirts of Braintree in Essex, and has been built with funds bequeathed to the Lodge by Brother John Burgess Howard.

The site chosen was a beautiful old garden originally forming part of the grounds of a large house which was demolished several years ago, and, being well wooded, forms a pleasing background to the building. The general elevations are finished in pale cream rendering and the plinth and piers are of mottled black glazed bricks. Parapets throughout are of 2 in. blue York stone with a recessed course of sky blue tiles underneath. The side and rear elevations are additionally relieved by a base of yellow Kent stock facings and azure blue tiles to the faces of the dwarf piers between the Temple windows. All the brick facings are finished with a flush vertical joint and raked out horizontal joints. The entrance is approached by a flight of shallow tile-finished steps with flank walls and truncated piers of mottled black glazed bricks. The oak entrance screen is boxed out in the centre to form a lobby, and has box lights over lighting the steps and the entrance hall. Glazing to the screen is of fine stippled on acid obscured glass. Protecting the screen is a reinforced concrete canopy of some 7 ft. projection by about 24 ft. wide. Opening from the entrance hall is a committee room 15 ft. 1 in. square, with an oak floor and the walls lined to a height of 6 ft. with flush oak panelling, and a cloakroom of similar size. Access to the Temple is via a small Tylers Room finished in similar manner to the committee room, but with recessed skirtings and boxed door jambs of Macassar ebony. Seating about 120 persons on raised oak platforms arranged on the four sides, the Temple has been designed on simple lines to form a background for Masonic ritual rather than an example of decoration. Windows high up on the two long sides give natural lighting for the few periods when the room is used during the day. From floor to window cills the walls have a flush oak finish with horizontal bands of silver bronze. Macassar ebony has been used for the recessed skirtings, jambs of doors and to the truncated piers at each side of the recess behind the W.M.'s chair. Illustration **2** is the side elevation and shows the side exit from the Temple. **3** is a view from the garden.



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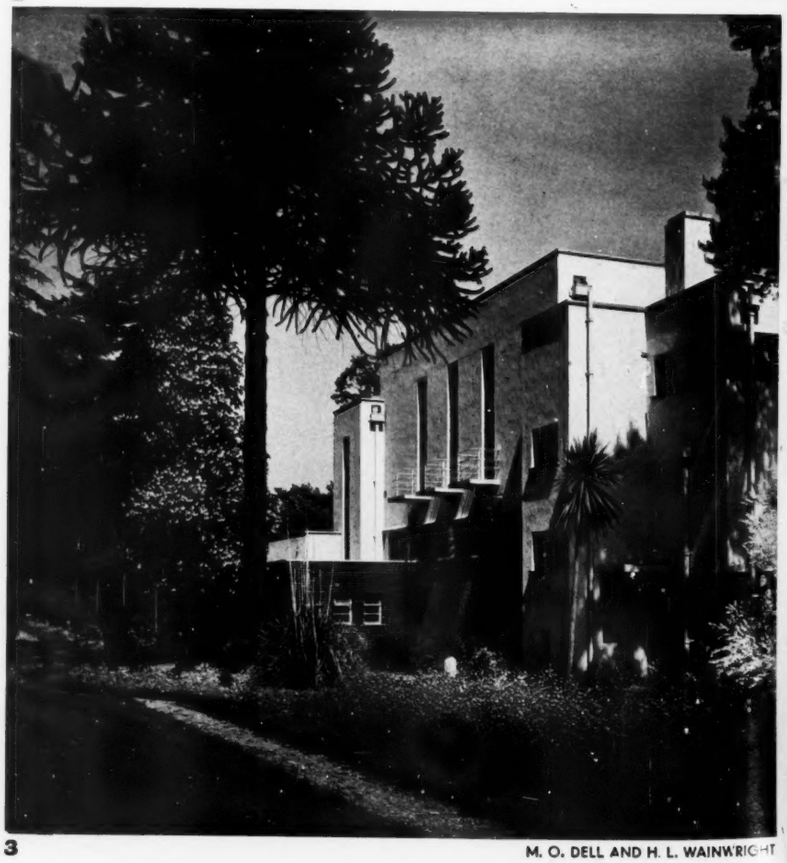

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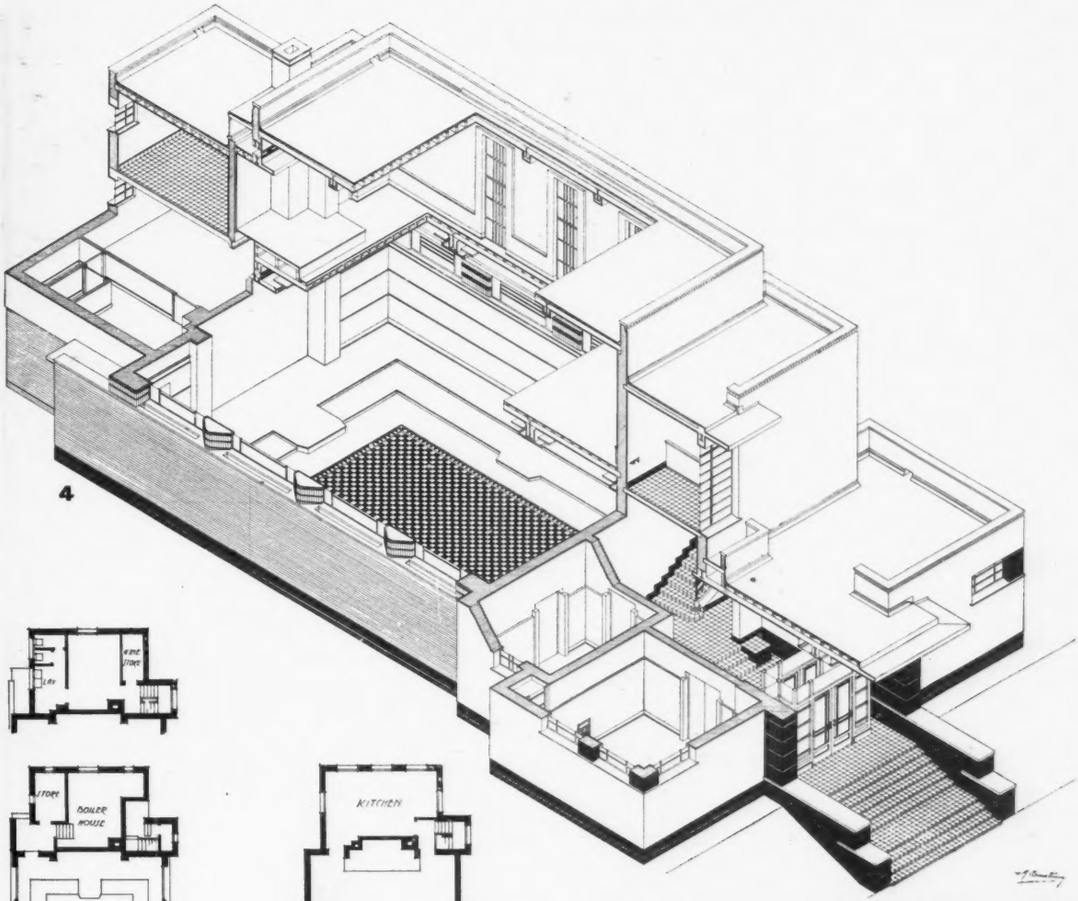
M. O. DELL AND H. L. WAINWRIGHT



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4. The preliminary sketch of the building was made showing a one-storied structure, but owing to the necessity of providing sufficient car parking space and to suit the nature of the garden, it was decided to place the dining hall immediately over the Temple; in the sketch this is on the right of the Temple. **5**. The ground and first floor plans. **6**. The Temple. The walls and stair, garden wall and coromandel hangings are in "Masonic Red" fabric. The lighting is by concealed strip lights arranged in continuous runs on each side of the main beams supporting the floor over, and to each of the two short walls. The lights reflect on to the ceiling and can be dimmed or made brilliant according to the nature of the Masonic function. At the rear is the boiler house equipped with a fully automatic oil fuel fired boiler for heating and hot water, and stores for Lodge furniture.

A MASONIC LODGE IN ESSEX

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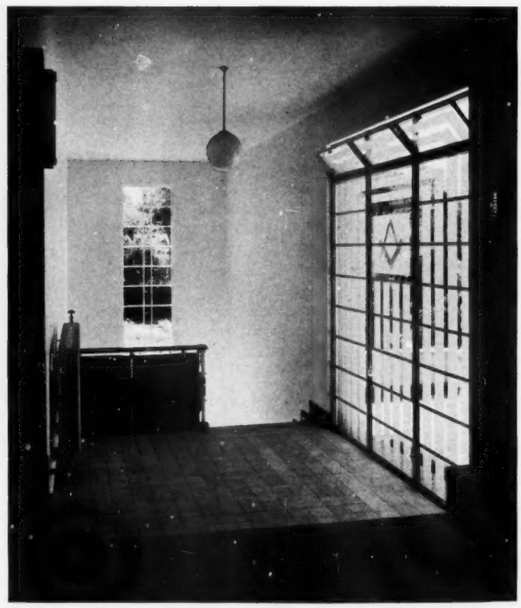

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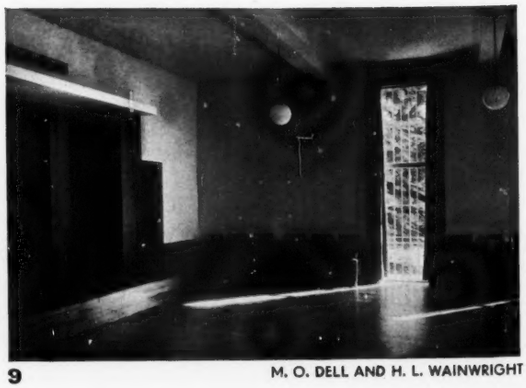

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7 and **8**. The staircase and landing, and crush hall, have plastered walls flat enamelled in a pale buff, with skirtings of black glazed tiles; the floors and the treads and risers to the stairs are grey and buff tiles, with handrails in silver and blue. The windows are of clear and acid treated glass. Metal windows have been used throughout, well recessed from the outer face of the walls and with one inch slate cills, set to a very slight weather. **9**. The dining hall, to seat 120 persons, is on the first floor. The floor is oak, with a dwarf flush oak dado and flat enamelled walls in pale buff above. Three narrow windows run the full height of the room, with doors in the lower portions opening on to small balconies.

M. O. DELL AND H. L. WAINWRIGHT

Scenario for a Human Drama

[FOREWORD]

By P. Morton Shand

This is a memorable book, for it is the first in English which liberates architecture from its narrower self, and shows us the modern house as the technical product it really is against a background of the crystallizing discoveries and resultant complications of modern life.

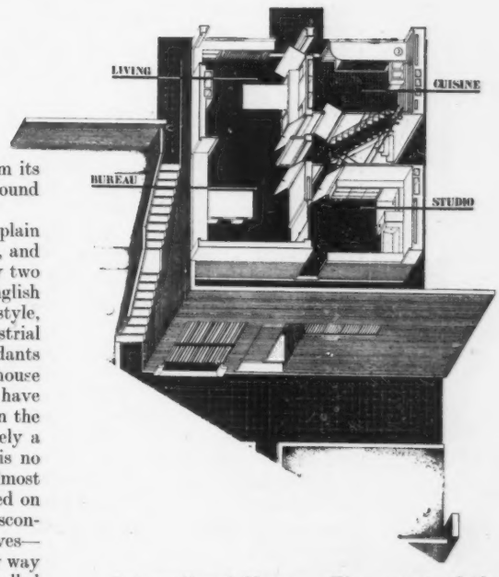
Mr. Yorke takes up the story at the point we have now reached. It was none of his business to explain how we got there. But this is something which it is quite as important for us to understand, and the title of his book inevitably recalls another, also memorable in its way, which appeared only two years ago: the late Nathaniel Lloyd's *History of the English House*. Mr. Lloyd left the English house where its formal evolution abruptly ceased. That elegant young aristocrat, the Regency style, had barely time to make his bow before he was rushed off the scene in the tumbrels of the Industrial Revolution. The moral of Mr. Yorke's book is that we should welcome his foreign-born descendants not as bolshevizing foreigners but as returning *emigrés*. In presenting us with the modern house sprung fully equipped from the brains of those handful of pioneers who realized it, and have generalized it in less than fifteen years, his retrospect is necessarily of the shortest. Between the points at which Mr. Lloyd laid down his pen and Mr. Yorke took up his lies a gap, barely a century in point of time, but growing daily more incomprehensible to us. Yet this chasm is no historical blank. On the contrary, the period is so fully documented as to lend substance to almost any theoretical interpretation. And there lies the danger. That the present is always founded on the past is a commonplace fraught with only too many pitfalls. Found the present on a misconception of the immediate past and you multiply them proportionately. To understand ourselves—that is how we have come to the modern house—we must understand the gropings after a new way of living of a century which consciously put back the clock in the compartment of civilization called "Art," but kept it well ahead of the time-lag in almost every other department of life.

It is only exhaustion—reaching the end of the last possible *cul-de-sac*—which has brought us back to the point of departure young men in Regency architects' offices must have been meditating when the revolution that was to have made the world safe for plutocracy broke out. The only road that led, as it always has led, straight forward from one achievement in the mastery of structural technique to another, was singled out to be ignored. Revivals of styles led to blends of styles, which culminated in the attempt to invent a new style. *Art nouveau* was foredoomed to failure because it was based neither on fresh structural progress nor on the need for a new type of building, but purely on the desire for a new decorative veneer. After the war academic design petered out in a last spasm of sterile imitation, the Neo-Georgian, echoed at a respectful distance by the speculative builders' Neo-Tudor. And all the time form was strangling structure, the wall outside the rooms enclosed clothes, bodies, appearances, realities. Architecture became a hopeless case of galloping consumption.

Throughout the nineteenth century the only "house" talked of abroad was the English house. Neither French, Italian nor German houses offered concrete examples of a definite national type of dwelling. England was the standing exemplar of a highly developed home life which had produced a correspondingly high standard of domestic comfort and practical convenience. But there was another reason for this. The English house was already a standardized, almost a mass-produced type of building. That standardization had begun with the smaller eighteenth-century country seats, for which the rapidly increasing wealth of the mercantile classes created a steady demand. Later this model was developed into what we should call a norm-type by the immense territorial expansion of London. That norm was severely structural, and economically eschewed "architecture." In wealthier neighbourhoods a storey was added in height and an extra window in breadth, but this plain cubic box of bricks remained consistently true to type for nearly fifty years.

There is no sort of doubt that the English urban house of 1800 was the direct prototype of the functional house of today; or that the stage of evolution which the latter represents is what, but for the industrial revolution and its paradoxical consequences, might have been the former's next radical development. Open planning, the solitary tangible contribution of the nineteenth century, was once again an English achievement. These points need to be stressed because they explain why the word "English" is necessarily part of Mr. Lloyd's title, and is just as necessarily not of Mr. Yorke's. With relatively minor modifications, the norm that was originally a local English product has become as international a standard as the meridian of Greenwich.

The intervening century of architectural retrogression can be roughly divided into three periods: from Gropius to Behrens, from Behrens to Ruskin, and from Ruskin to Soane. These I propose to cover in three successive retrospects in forthcoming issues, which will seek to establish some continuous concatenation of effect and cause in the home's slow emancipation from forms that dictated plan to forms that are the expression of plan alone. Any attempt to straighten out the tangled chain between them must be largely a speculative analysis. And since there are many apparently missing links it is necessary to proceed to some extent by the examination paper method of question and answer. Many of the questions I shall set myself I am likely to have to confess I find unanswerable. Readers of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW are invited to supplement my anything but exhaustive knowledge of these periods by their own.



International House. The names of the rooms given to this Belgian plan (by J. Franssen) illustrate clearly how international the modern house really is, a synthesis of the best elements from all countries.

To-Day*

By F. R. S. Yorke

EXPERIMENT, invention, the immense scale and scope of modern industry, and the demands imposed by modern life, have completely changed the methods of construction which prevailed for centuries, and have produced new synthetic materials which are stronger and lighter and generally more efficient than the old natural materials. Steel and concrete have their own forms and their own beauty. The new materials and the revolutionary systems of construction based upon their properties make it possible for us to plan our buildings according to our needs, with freedom and economy, with immense spans and slender supports, with cantilevered façades, so that the traditional sense of dimension, proportion and scale is destroyed, for not only is the internal organization affected, but the external form also. This form is the result of the plan, the construction, and the materials, not of a

*** This article is a summary of the book "The Modern House," by F. R. S. Yorke, just published by The Architectural Press and reviewed on page 20.**

preconceived idea of what a building should look like, or an essay in a popular style.

It is absurd to impose upon the new materials, that are essentially light, the classic forms that are essentially heavy. It is equally absurd that a steel structure should be clothed in stone so that it looks like a structure of mass-masonry, or that the concrete house, which, but for expansion joints, is a monolith, should have joints scribed upon its surface so that it appears as a pile of small blocks.

Architecture suffers because, recognizing it as an art, we ruin it by our respect, our insistence that art be "artistic." Car-building is not recognized as an art in the "artistic" sense, and the design of the twentieth-century vehicle is consequently unhampered by sentiment and artistic titivation. Yet a house and an automobile are built for purposes equally functional.

Even in so personal a matter as dress man is content to conform to a standard, which has its minor variations, but from which there is little departure. The owner of the pseudo-Tudor villa is quite aware of the ridiculous figure he would cut, were he perchance to find himself at his office in doublet and hose, yet he does not realize that his olde worlde home is as absurd, and hampers movement just as much, as obsolete clothing.

Whilst he is willing enough to conform to this standard, and finds there is still scope for the indulgence of personal taste, he fears a standard in architecture and likes his house in fancy dress. That a standard is not intolerable is, however, evidenced by the fact that hundreds of thousands of people live today in suburban houses exactly alike in plan, and are barely aware of it. But such a standard as exists is obsolete, and cries to be superseded. Surely every style is a standard in essentials. Without a standard there can be no architecture.

The outlook towards architecture, it appears, is anything but rational. The men who cultivate the perfect trouser-crease abhor straight unbroken lines in building, and those who detest the vulgarity of a personal display of jewellery are inclined to judge architecture by its wealth of ornament.

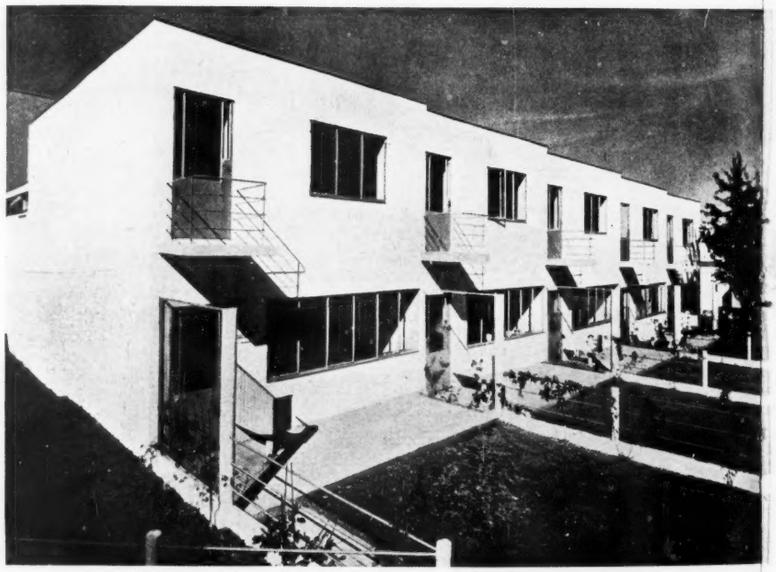
There is no suggestion that the adoption of a standard would mean our all living in houses identical in plan and elevation, but that we should accept the straightforward building that follows logically modern constructional practice and the new conception of domestic life, devoid of the artificial and the superficial, suited to present-day needs, and without stylistic clichés, either traditional or modernistic.

Only by the acceptance of a modern standard can there be any escape from the monotony that variety brings to the road in which every house, though obviously similar in plan, strives to look different from its neighbour; in which unsuitable materials and conflicting elements, even bits of 1-inch board—with football studs for pegs—nailed to the gable, add the touch of individuality.

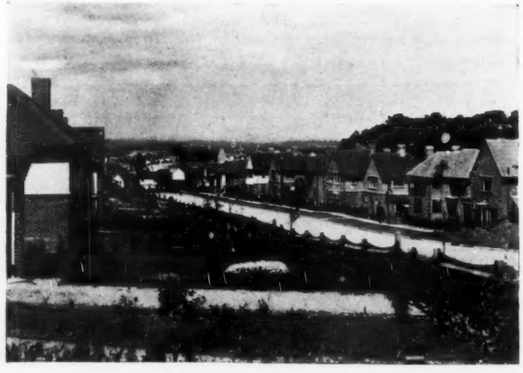
Towards the close of the last century

An early standard; simple variations, but a homogeneous whole nevertheless. A group of cottages at Arlington Row, Bibury.

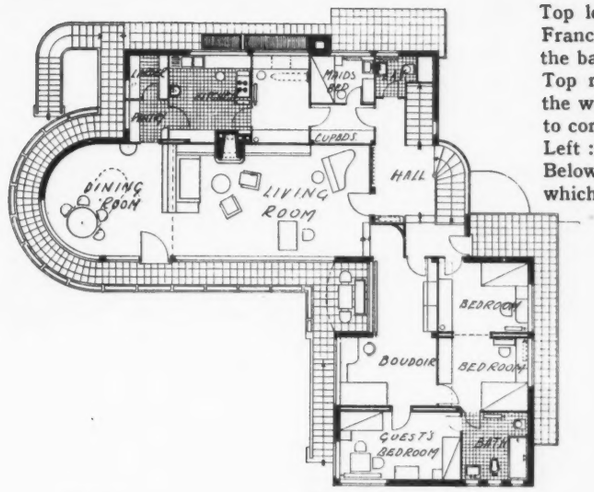
A nineteenth-century standard. The street repetition of one design in a terrace of houses in Lloyd Square, London.

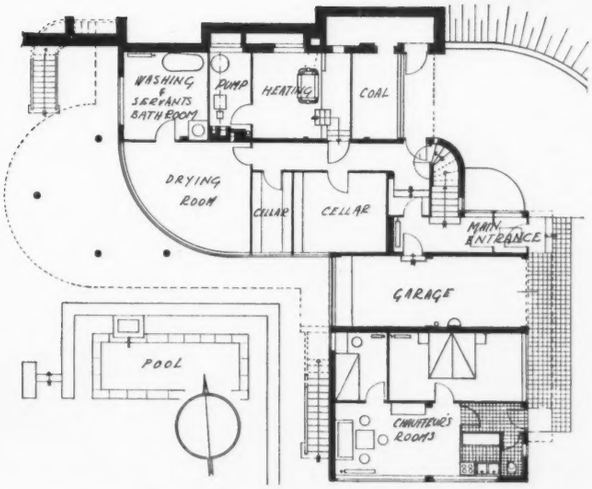


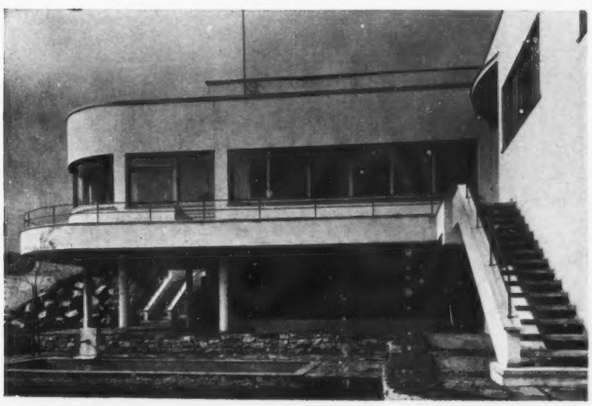
A modern standard. Workers' houses at Amsterdam, designed by J. J. P. Oud.



No standard. Real monotony resulting from a gappy lay-out and a lack of any standard. A contemporary English suburban development scheme.







Top left : The south elevation to the garden of a house in France, by André Lurçat. A reinforced concrete stair leads to the balcony at first floor level and to a garden on the roof.
Top right : The north elevation of the same house, showing the windows to living-room and library on the ground floor and to corridor and boudoir above.
Left : Plans of a house in Germany, by Heinrich Lauterbach.
Below : the south wall of the living-room of the same house, which is glazed along its entire length.

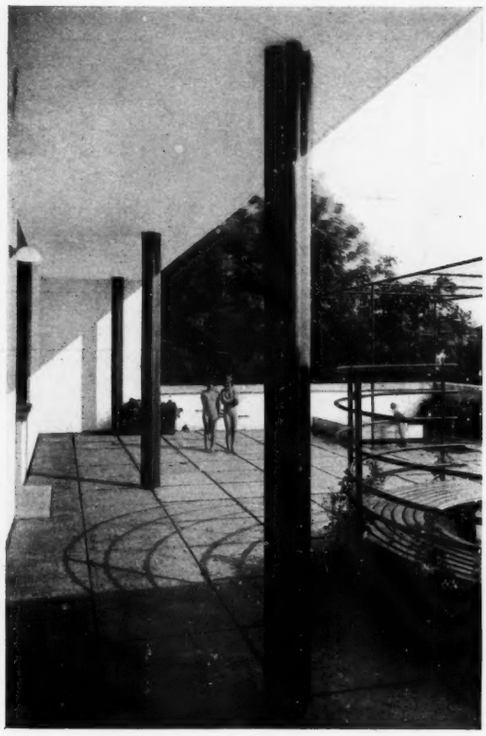
building technique and design, as practised, were so far out of date, and the immediate architectural background so confused, that architects attempted to excuse the impotence that resulted from a muddled outlook by pretending that urgent practical requirements were not of a new order, and that contemporary problems could be solved by old methods ; they had ceased to be planners and designers of structure and had become specialists in the reproduction of the antique, and it is in this capacity that they are best known to the majority of the lay-public today.

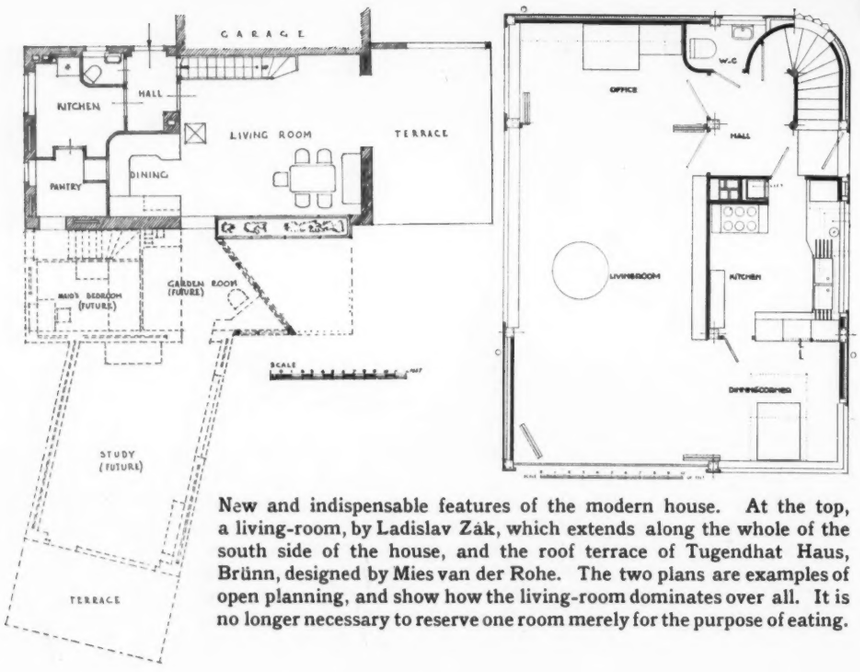
But a few men—free designers, influenced by William Morris, Philip Webb, and the New Art Movement—realized the futility of the pursuit of the styles, and tried, each in his own way, to supplant the academic by creative effort.

Their attitude, in consideration of the immediate architectural background, was inevitable. There was no stylistic integration until the war came, accelerating the disclosure of defects, and emphasizing the importance of economy, and hence the inseparability of architecture from structure. But during the war, in Holland, a neutral country, where painting had, through cubism and expressionism, already given impetus to revolt against copyism in architecture, Mondriaan, using clean rectangles of colour and straight lines, influenced men like Dudok and Rietveld ; and whilst his work provided a basis for new extravagances and meaningless modernistic architectural adornments, it also showed the value of straight lines, plane surfaces, a new sense of space and a new sense of proportion.

Meanwhile there was a growing appreciation of the works of engineers, of the beauty that arrived through serviceability, not sought self-consciously.

There came a period of purification and, largely under the influence of le Corbusier,





New and indispensable features of the modern house. At the top, a living-room, by Ladislav Zák, which extends along the whole of the south side of the house, and the roof terrace of Tugendhat Haus, Brünn, designed by Mies van der Rohe. The two plans are examples of open planning, and show how the living-room dominates over all. It is no longer necessary to reserve one room merely for the purpose of eating.

the unnecessary was eliminated. A little more than a decade ago there appeared the first buildings of a new architecture, based on a scientific approach to building through an analysis of function.

The new work was not based on attempts to discover a new style or new shapes ; the architects found a new expression through the new methods they employed in the construction of buildings to accommodate those who had found a new and more enlightened mode of living. Just as the clothing of women changed in appearance as it became more practical and healthy, cut on lines permitting greater freedom of movement, so the face of the building changes with freedom in planning and the employment of flexible materials.

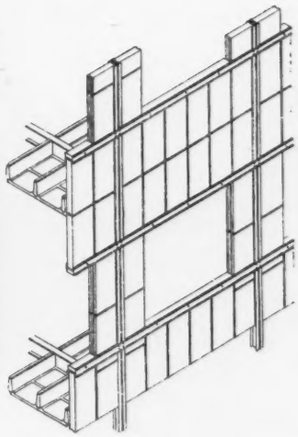
The history of domestic architecture, in the periods to which the majority of architects, even at the present time, look for inspiration, shows the growth, side by side, of the houses of the upper classes, the crude amenities of which were luxuries within the reach of only a very wealthy few, and the hovels and cottages of the peasant and the artisan, removed only a degree from cave dwellings. Conditions presented few difficulties to the planner : the mansions of the rich afforded a multiplication of rooms and large domestic staffs to look after them ; the poor managed with the most rudimentary sort of shelter.

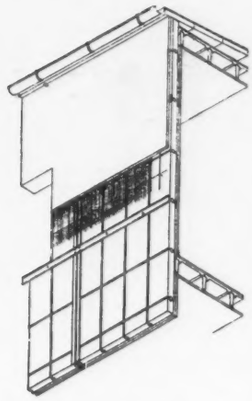
Today the house plan is based on intensive organization of space units and equipment, and the problem is further changed because convenient, well-planned houses are no longer within the reach of the very rich alone. Industrialism and a redistribution of wealth have brought us to an age in which, whilst an ever-increasing number of the people are able to be adequately housed, only a very few can afford, or require, big establishments.

Comparatively few really large houses are built. Mechanical devices ease the servant problem, and even the luxury home is on a relatively small scale, money being spent on equipment and furnishing—and automobiles and travel—rather than on a multiplicity of apartments within the home.

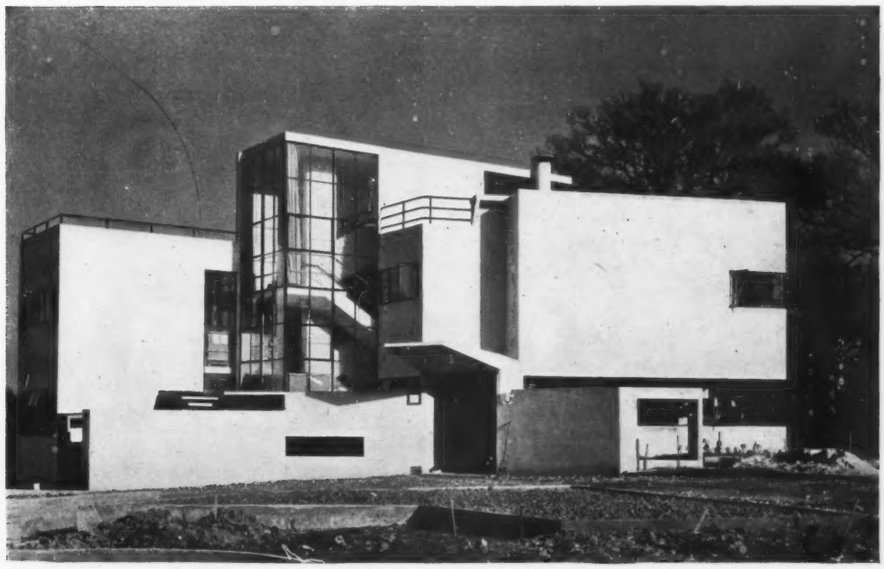
The house was evolved from the outside inwards, and, comprising an "incoherent jumble of a large number of rooms," was wasteful of space and necessitated a large domestic staff to work it.

Today, although more people are able to live comfortably, few are able to afford large houses. We do not need large houses, for we have neither large families to fill them nor domestics to look after them. The machine-minder earns more money than





A house in Germany, by Luckhardt and Anker. Views of the south side under construction and as finished. The terrace is cantilevered over a garage. The top diagram shows the skeleton construction with pre-cast concrete filling of the outer wall, and the diagram below shows the outer wall structure with roof joint.



A house in England, by Connell and Ward. The entrance is protected by a cantilevered reinforced concrete canopy.

the household drudge, and because servants are scarce we rely upon mechanical devices and efficient organization to lighten work in the home.

The dwelling-house is a complex organism, and the planning problem that arises from a consideration of the essential requirements is one of co-ordinating a number of small but indispensable units, differing in size, each with its own characteristics, yet all inter-related ; and an arrangement of the services—central heating, lighting, cooking, vacuum cleaning, laid-on water and drainage. The bathroom and the w.c. were early components of the house-machine ; since their inception science and industry have supplied us with many hygienic and labour-saving devices, and it has been shown that man needs, in addition to efficient sanitary and hygienic arrangements, light, air and space. That such amenities were not considered in the " styles " on which we are so apt to base the design of our homes, is evident from the fact that the tax upon windows, and consequently upon light and air, prevailed in England until 1851.

Certain needs are common to all of us, and must form the basis for the preparation of any plan. Man may be regarded as a specific type of animal, and his dwelling and its parts arranged to suit his habits. Individual requirements are an important but secondary consideration where economy governs design.

Since Victorian days, through the application of scientific discovery to practical requirements, we have found a new freedom and a wider interest ; a new attitude of mind towards human life and human needs. There are greater facilities for travel and change, and we are determined to avail ourselves of them, to enjoy our lives, and to free ourselves from subordination to our surroundings : from the narrow limits of the old type of home.

The home is no longer permanent from generation to generation ; family ties, inconsistent with freedom of living, are broken. We demand spaciousness, release from encumbrances, from furniture and trappings that overload our rooms, possessions that tie us and tools that are obsolete.

●

The principal elements of the façade are the wall and the window. The use of the frame and the application of the cantilever principle make possible the provision of windows of unlimited length, uninterrupted by vertical supports ; not only the plan but the façade is free, and any part, or the whole of it, may be of glass ; the window can extend from floor to ceiling and along the whole length of the room, and curtains can be employed to control light intensity. A maximum sunlight period is obtainable and full advantage can be taken of the view in any direction. There need be no piers to form areas of opaque walling between the lights, dividing the glazing into small isolated units that lend a harsh quality to daylight.

In earlier times sunlight was regarded as harmful rather than beneficial ; it was considered a stimulant to the growth of bacteria, and windows were made small

Sun, light, air. A house at Zurich by O. Salvisberg. A reinforced concrete wall forms a deep, narrow lintol spanning the opening between the summer living-room and the garden. Glazed doors slide on tracks into cavities within the walls.

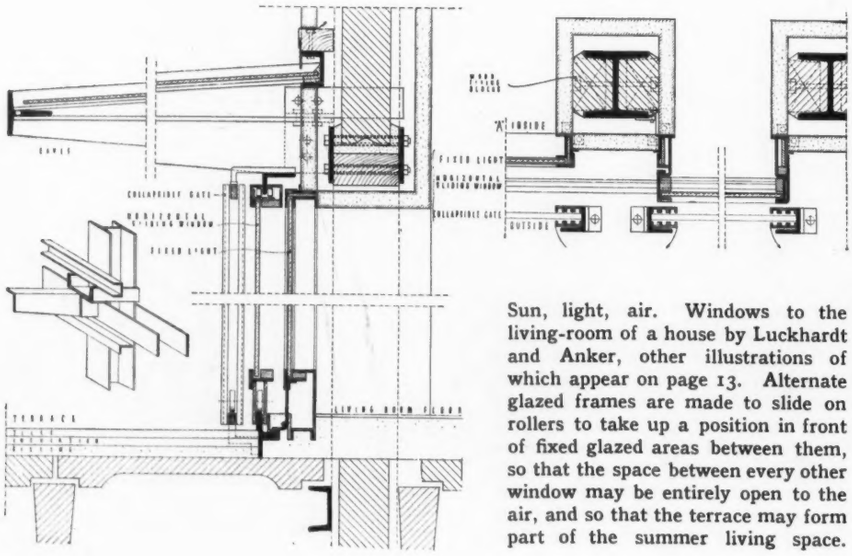
deliberately and placed away from the sunny side. It did not occur to the people that the effect of the sun upon garbage, and not upon their bodies or their rooms, was the real cause of the mischief. Through medical research we have learnt better, and today sunlight is accepted as healthy and desirable ; we take sun-baths and even artificial sun-ray treatments ; we like large windows, and sometimes fill them with special glass to admit the ultra-violet rays. But architects find it difficult to reconcile large glass areas with the types of façade that were designed about small ones, and they employ heavy mullions and transomes and ridiculous little panes in a half-hearted attempt to " keep the scale."

Architectural tradition is based upon the wall accepted as the main support of building structure. The walls of the past, being structural, were designed to express massiveness by a contrast between solid and void, and the solidarity was accentuated by infrequent piercing and deep reveals. The expression of the wall as a thin sheathing, of no more structural importance than the window, is a manifestation of modern constructional methods. The function of the wall has changed ; it is a thin skin, hung on a framework instead of standing on a foundation. " It represents a change in architectural method more profound than any previous structural invention," and we see that where the modern purpose of the wall is appreciated by the architect there is a change in the design of the façade.

The wall surface is regarded, æsthetically, as a continuous plane ; as a skin enveloping and expressing the surface of a volume.

The placing and size of windows is no longer governed by the requirements of symmetry ; the glass becomes part of the continuous enveloping membrane, flush with the outer face, and the contrast between window and wall surface, which tends to emphasize the massiveness of the wall, is much reduced by this arrangement.

The character is expressed rather by the material and the disposition of the parts of the surface than by scale and proportion in the accepted traditional sense.

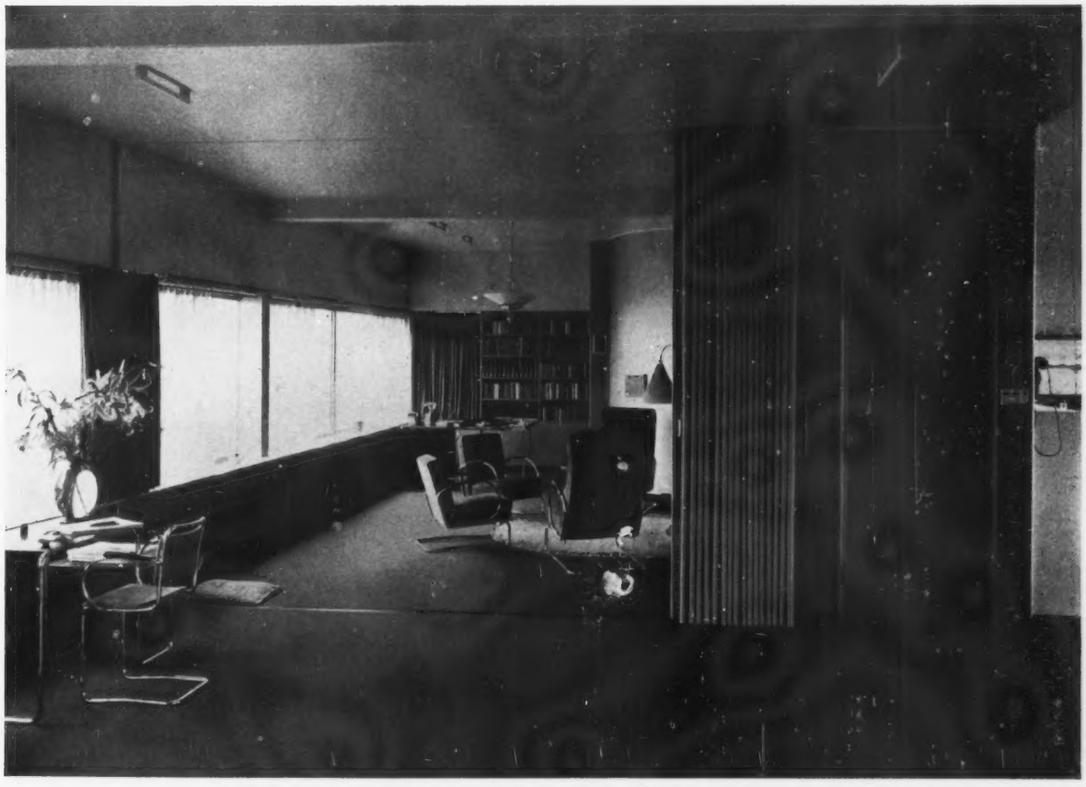


Sun, light, air. Windows to the living-room of a house by Luckhardt and Anker, other illustrations of which appear on page 13. Alternate glazed frames are made to slide on rollers to take up a position in front of fixed glazed areas between them, so that the space between every other window may be entirely open to the air, and so that the terrace may form part of the summer living space.

●

The pitched roof was evolved with earlier methods of construction as a means of covering over spans too great to permit the economical use of the lintol. When we

Sun, light, air. A house in Westphalia by Lois Welzenbacher. An example of the summer living space extended to the garden. Large areas of glazing are made to disappear below floor level by means of electrically operated counterweights.



Space. A living-room in Holland by Brinkman and Van der Vlugt, which is divisible by means of a collapsible rubber screen. The dining recess is through an opening on the right.

Economy of space and an equipment arrangement determined precisely by the work to be done and the materials it necessitates. A Belgian kitchen by L. H. de Koninck.

employ frame construction and concrete slabs the pitched roof is unnecessary, and the insulation it provides can be obtained as economically and as effectively with modern insulating materials.

The pitched roof has, in fact, disadvantages. It governs the plan shape, and often makes flexible planning uneconomical. The flat roof in no way restricts planning. It is effective in reducing the cubical contents of a building, and, with the addition of a stairway, it becomes accessible as a terrace or roof garden, giving outdoor space for recreation and sleeping.

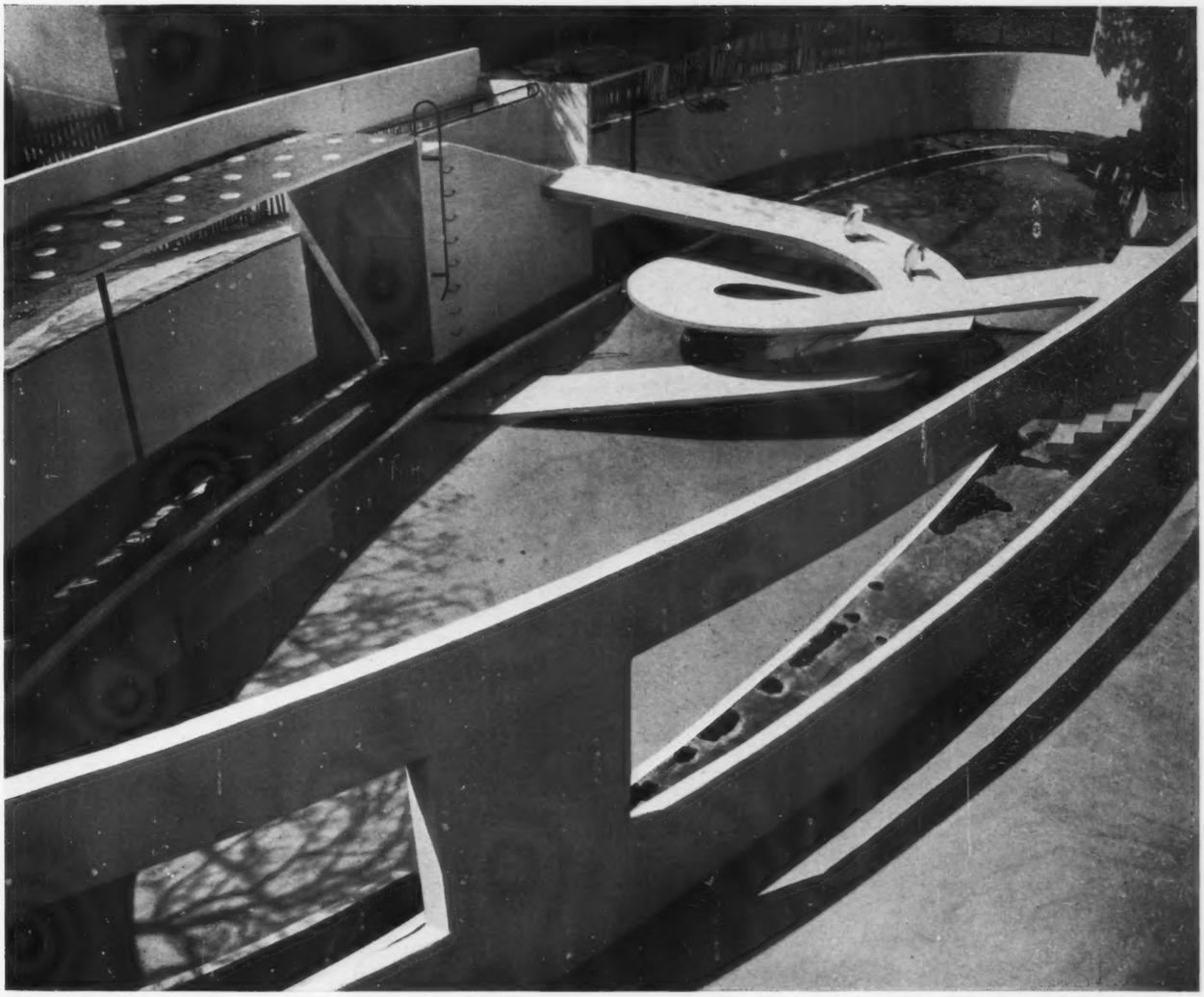
The demand for out-of-door sleeping and exercise space on porch or roof follows the realization of the value of light and air and the large window. There is no real foundation for the popular supposition that in a climate such as ours there is little opportunity for the enjoyment of the facilities offered by the roof terrace. People who have flat roofs, that are easily accessible, find it possible to enjoy the sunshine from March to October. In the present year we were able to sun-bathe and take our meals on unprotected flat roofs in London as early as the end of March, and in Northern Germany, where the climate is little or no more certain than our own, the occupants of the Haus Loosen at Cologne took sunbaths on sunny days in February.

In order to avoid expansion and contraction, and to provide a top surface that withstands hard wear without detrimental consequences, it is customary to cover the roofing materials with 1½ inch concrete flags, cast *in situ* with wide joints, and bedded in a 1-inch layer of gravel in which grass is planted. le Corbusier employs this method; his roofs are concave, and the water that falls on them, flowing inwards, filters slowly through the roots, and eventually reaches a down-pipe that passes through the centre of the house. Many years of use have proved the method satisfactory, both as a weather-resistant and as insulation against expansion and contraction. Of the roof garden le Corbusier has said: "Ferro-concrete normally provides a roof surface that is flat, watertight and homogeneous. Severe climates demonstrate that the drainage of snow water, melted under the influence of central heating—a present-day problem which is very disturbing—should take place in the interior of the house, in the warm, protected from frost. Expansion is the great enemy of ferro-concrete and metal construction. The establishment of gardens on the roof successfully combats expansion. Plants, flowers and trees grow better in roof gardens than in the open ground: they are practically under the conditions of a greenhouse.

"Let us sift the advantages of pillars and roof gardens. The plan of the modern house can be reversed. The reception rooms will be at the top, in direct communication with the roof garden, in the fresh air, away from the street with its dust and noise, in full sunshine. The roof becomes a solarium, and the demands of modern hygiene are satisfied. Generalization: the whole ground-surface of the town is free, available for walking on. The ground is in a sense doubled; transported to gardens up aloft, right in the sun."

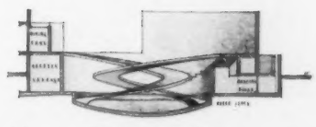
The goal? Will advertisements such as this vie with automobile sales-talks in magazine pages during the next decade? Will the trade-marked house compete with any other trade-marked article? The above is actual copy prepared by a great new building group in America which intends to sell mass-produced houses.

THE PENGUIN POOL IN THE ZOO

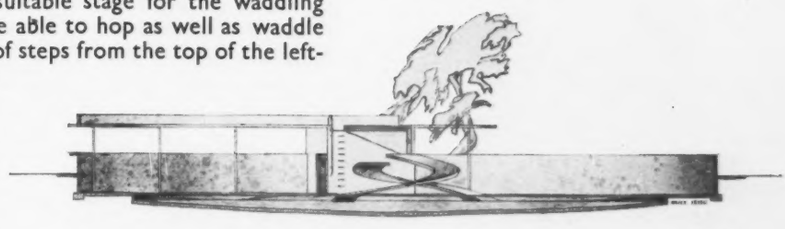


1 JOHN HAVINDEN

The site available for the new Penguin Pool in the Zoological Gardens, Regent's Park, London, lacked direction and did little to dictate the design; a self-contained shape was therefore called for, producing, for this and other reasons, the elliptical plan. The problems requiring solution were comparatively simple. Penguins have an attractive and faintly ridiculous quality. The Pool would become a popular spectacle and must provide a suitable setting for any latent publicity talent. A sensational and dramatic design was therefore quite justifiable. The two cantilevered ramps, **1**, spiralling round each other without any intermediate support, have a theatrical quality and provide a suitable stage for the waddling gait of the penguins, who are shown to be able to hop as well as waddle by the stepped ramps. Reached by a flight of steps from the top of the left-hand ramp, is a glass-fronted diving tank at the eye level of spectators, and in this is shown the contrast between great agility under water and extreme awkwardness on land. The penguins can be seen from a variety of levels—from below when they are at the top of the ramp or from above when they are at the Pool level. The architects were Lubetkin, Drake and Tecton.



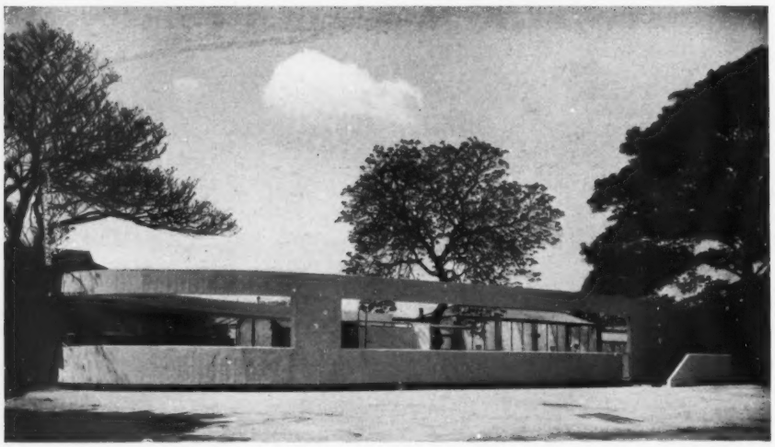
2 CROSS SECTION



LONGITUDINAL SECTION

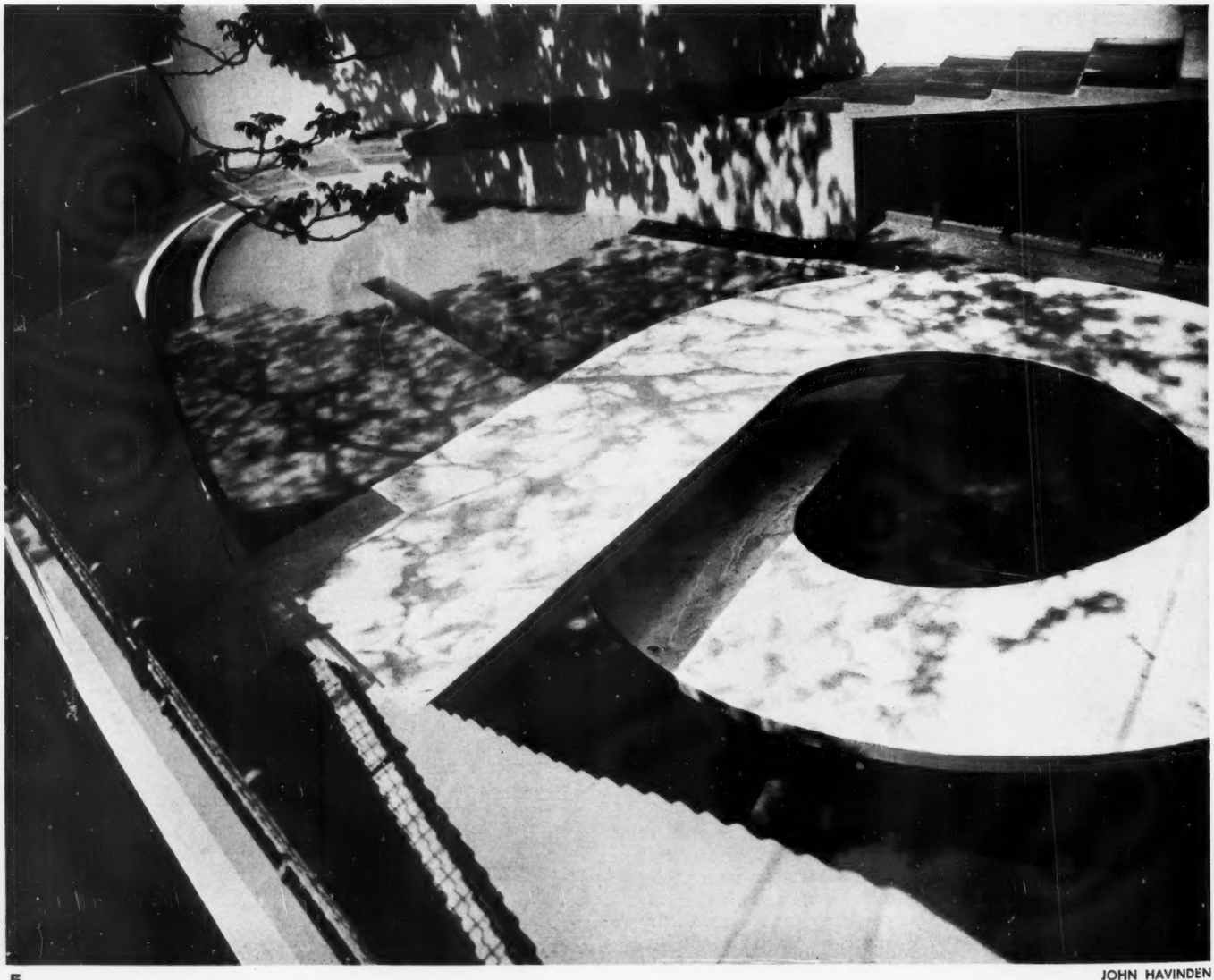
3

THE PENGUIN POOL



4

A genuine attempt has been made to preserve the birds from the boredom which generally overtakes all zoo inhabitants. They have necessary protection from the sun, **5** and **Plate iv,** since the surrounding trees have been preserved and a cover is provided over part of the circumference of the Pool. They have a variety of surfaces for their feet, ranging from plastic rubber on the flat paths to slate on the steps, and the concrete of the ramps is permanently wetted by a revolving fountain. The bottom of the Pool is painted a bright blue which is clearly visible in the water. During the short time that the penguins have been in possession it has been found that they spend more time in the water than they did in the past, and that on land, owing to the more varied interest of their surroundings, they take more exercise. Their nesting boxes have also been improved, as



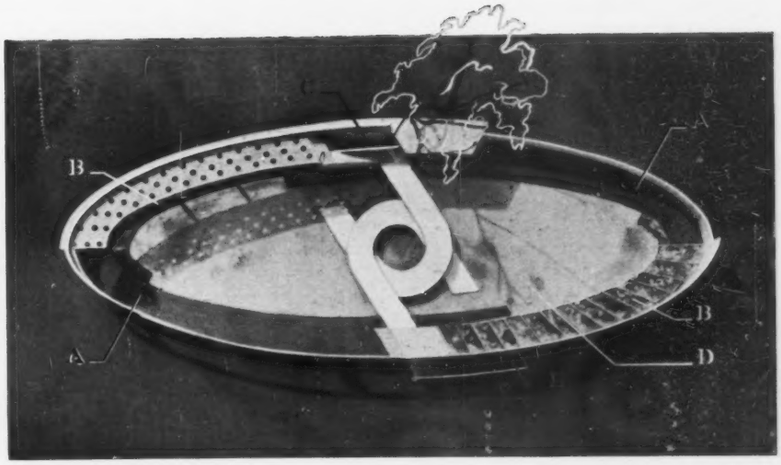
5

JOHN HAVINDEN

6 JOHN HAVINDEN

they can now be cleaned from the back without disturbing the sitting birds. The Pool is constructed throughout in reinforced concrete. The elliptical shape is of use structurally as the Pool is below ground level and the wall is, at its base, a retaining wall, gaining greatly in strength from its shape. It has one other advantage in that it acts as an effective sounding-board for the penguins' cries. The spiral ramps are cantilevered from their two ends, and have no intermediate support at the point where one loops inside the other. Illustration **4** is a view of the Pool from the north-east. **6**. An end view showing the arrangement of the ramps. **7**. A model of the Pool. The key to the reference letters is as follows :—

A : Plastic rubber (ciment fondu, cork chippings and rubber). B : Slabs of $\frac{1}{2}$ in. deep grey slate paving on concrete. C : Diving tank with 1 in. plate-glass front ; storage under. D : Swimming pool rendered two coats Venetian blue stone covering paint. E : Exterior pit for cleaning and supervising nesting boxes.



7

The Small House of Today

By E. Maxwell Fry

THE MODERN HOUSE. By F. R. S. Yorke, A.R.I.B.A. London : The Architectural Press, Price 21s. net.

THE individual villa house is far from being the whole story of housing, as the author has very well realized. His introductory remarks make it clear that although his book deals only with the design of detached houses, it does so because the individual house has provided modern architects all over Europe with "the cheapest complete building unit for examination and experiment, and it is most often in this small structure that modern architecture goes through its complete revolution."

It is true to say that modern architecture is nearly always greater than the small houses that have been made its instrument ; that often enough materials have been pressed into a service beyond their capacity to perform, and that for the realization of another advance towards a clearer conception of an architecture in new dimensions architects have been prepared to take risks. But this is not setting a low value upon the concrete achievements of modern architects in this sphere of building. Far from it. Only the very prejudiced could fail to be moved by the intense spirit of fine creation that gives strength and vitality to every line of the buildings illustrated in this book. The point is that this creative spirit embraces a wider sphere than has been common to architecture in the past. Most of the architects who have contributed to the book are conducting researches into urbanism, town planning, and the larger issues in the struggle to adapt our lives to modern industrialism, and industrialism to a better plan for living. The small house, fulfilling still a deep want that certain happily placed sections of the community have money to gratify, provides the architect with the means of putting into practice ideas which have their final application in the service of the wider community—when the community is prepared to receive them.

In the meantime, and probably for some time to come, the client with a detached house to build and courage to spare, who will trust himself with a modern architect, will not be without his reward. For however much the modern architects appear to be in advance of their time, their strength as designers arises from a realization of the spirit that moves people, however unconsciously, to prefer a freer form of living, combined with a more logical sense of the uses to which modern materials should properly be put. No architect has been granted a clearer intellectual grasp of the truth than has Mies van der Rohe, whose lovely Tugendhat Haus at Brünn is reproduced in satisfactory detail and is published on page 12 of this issue. However small may be his output, measured in terms of physical matter, his empire over the minds of sensitive modern architects all over the world has been complete. And however small or apparently unrelated to larger questions of urbanism these houses may appear, they should be regarded as part of a much wider sphere of enquiry, even while we enjoy what they have to show in their separate identity as single family homes.

Mr. Yorke's plan of compilation has been a good one. The book is divided into six parts of which the first is an examination, clearly and simply stated, of the bases of modern architecture as exemplified in the work he reproduces later, followed by chapters dealing with the plan, the wall, the window and the roof. Every point is made clear with photograph and working drawing or sketch plan, building up the mental conception of functional planning and logical building in readiness for the grand flow of photographs and plans of houses from every country in Europe, and from America, which forms part five. With the plans there is a brief specification of construction, materials and equipment, with very often a small detailed drawing explaining a point of particular interest.

A final chapter on experimental prefabricated houses carries the story of house building as far forward as it can go at present. In this last chapter is contained matter of great importance to architects. As Mr. Yorke says : "the individual-architect-designed house is a luxury product ; it is not possible, or even desirable, in an age of big population, that many such houses should be built. . . . The small house is today a mass-produced industrial product. . . . In 1924 six cars were produced for the same amount of labour and capital required to produce one in 1904. We can only wonder that there is no other machine for the performance of the important social work that the speculative builder at present controls."

Now just as speculative building is controlled by organizations out of touch with the architect, though closely allied with him in the field of general building, so again the control of the pre-fabricated house may escape a profession jealously guarding its dwindling practice among the well-to-do. Yet the guiding and controlling of this new idea of house building is a work for architects to do, a more important work than much that is set store by, since it is another link between the lives of the people and the great industrial machine by which they live, a link that in the past has been so badly forged that mass-production, as the speculators have purveyed it, has made a mockery of community building, and a luxury of the profession of architecture. In the present unhappy position " it seems likely that if the architect associates himself actively with such a project in its initial stages, and is instrumental in bringing about standardization, he may recapture work in a field he has lost, and having readjusted his ideas of planning, continue to practise as he would at present, designing in terms of standardized pre-fabricated panels instead of 9 by 4½ by 3 in. bricks."

The ideas of pre-fabrication are inherent in modern architecture. One of the reasons why the houses in this book break so completely with the past, lies in this search for a system of exact assembly of dry factory-made parts, the beginnings of which can be traced to the early days of the last century, when for a few years there flared up the germs of a new architecture, only to be extinguished by the rising market of philistine England.

A Theatre of the Age

THE SHAKESPEARE MEMORIAL THEATRE.* By G. A. Jellicoe, A.R.I.B.A. London : Ernest Benn Ltd. Price £3 3s. net.

I SUPPOSE it would be just to call this theatre a product of the age ; yet it is not the work of the youthful spirit of this age. It bears too many signs of having been worried into existence. " What have the Germans done in the way of theatre-building ? " asked the Committee, and sent off architects to find out what had been done. They made notes, instead of dreaming dreams—they inspected all theatres likely to yield yet one more notion which—who knows—it might be possible to translate into English. Bayreuth, Köln, München, Paris and others, all yielded a notion or two, and these notions were put together after some worry and adaptation ; and the theatre was actually achieved. Everyone was working hard, and money was pouring in, and there was nothing to prevent the monument from going up ; it only needed a big effort, and the builders made it. And shall any such achievement lack for fullest

* It cost £162,787, exclusive of professional fees. In 1875, the new Paris Opera House, built by Charles Garnier, cost 48,500,000 francs, not including the expense of transforming the streets between the Chaussée d'Antin and the Théâtre Français.

praise? Indeed, no—we should only condemn unrealized ideas.

Although not an architect, I understand that never does a work of these proportions go through as the artist conceives it, unless he be a man of dominant personality and of financial independence. The dream and the job are nearly always two different things, today. Perhaps this is a pity, since, at certain periods of history, the dream and the job have occasionally been one . . . the Parthenon at Athens, for example—the Gothic cathedrals—and indeed, much else besides. This has been so with a few theatres—though I hesitate today to point to Palladio's theatre at Vicenza and Aleotti's at Parma.

I hesitate not because I do not in my soul believe, as I have ever believed, but because I have at last learnt one thing—which is, that nobody in England cares sufficiently to follow me in my beliefs regarding the theatre. And since it irks people in England to do so, and since they prefer the things which I detest, and since I have given so many years working to change this and not a single change has taken place in England—but up go the same old theatres, on come the same old actings, produced in the same old ways with the same old scenes—it only shows how splendidly, nationalistically conservative England is.

And I think that in regard to England, I am even more of a Conservative than an artist; and that, of course, is why I hesitate today to point to Palladio any more, or to mention the name of Aleotti again.

Were it not for this, I should naturally point out that Palladio's theatre consists of two simple parts, not of 20—a place for the people to sit in, and a place for them to act in—and there is nothing above or below these two places, and there are two simple entrances.

And what a fine, theatrical entrance is that of Aleotti's Parma theatre!

But, of course, since then, fires have been invented. I think that any man of sense will agree with me in using the word "invented" here. Theatrical fires have positively been created. In the first theatres of the world, a fire was impossible; and, therefore, the strangulating rules with which committees and County Councils now shackle the hands and feet of the architect, could not hinder in those days. Neither did the public cry out if the latest conveniences were not piled like the cells of a beehive all round a dangerous cave, packed full of electrical force or gas or both, where, given a spark, all the draughts could bring about a fire. But it does not need gas or electricity to make a fire—so many things can create it . . . and, therefore, one might think that there is only one safe kind of theatre, and that is the one which the Greeks invented—in the open air, with the sun to light the stage.

But again, I hesitate—jiminy! how I hesitate—to talk of the Greeks or the Romans or any of those people. In the matter of fires, as in everything else, progress must be allowed to have its head.

And so I will not mention any big defect which I may see in this Stratford theatre, and about which I may be quite wrong.

I do not wish to pick to pieces this theatre which has been put together so ably. All the pieces are in their right place, and you have, but to glance round to realize that this is an English theatre. You could not find one like this in any other land. The place will serve to frame not only the spectators, but also the work of Mr. Bridges Adams, Mr. Komissarjevsky, Mr. Polunin and possibly that of Herr Reinhardt; and in time, perhaps, some producers and actors from Africa, India, Egypt and California. It would, indeed, seem only fair that American and colonial performers should appear on the boards they so generously helped to lay down.

Can energy do too much? And can it be said that energy has over-decorated this building? Surely not . . . but if so, energy can easily lighten it by removing any heavy hangings, fixtures or whatnots; if energy can understand.

But what is needed on the stage is, assuredly, all the energy available. It is not the dreamer, the intellectual or the artist, who is needed on this stage—it is the expert organizer who will stand no nonsense—who will make plugs, taps and gadgets listen to his orders. The director of this theatre and its stage must be like a captain of a cricket team such as we send out to Australia; he must be, above all things, a professional. And it must be a continual source of satisfaction to everyone in Stratford-on-Avon, to feel that in Mr. Bridges Adams the best man for this difficult and thankless job has been secured.*

And it is impossible to turn the pages of this handsome book (such a book could only be produced in England) without one's thoughts turning to speculation as to what wonders Mr. Adams would have caused to be seen and heard from this well-equipped stage with its latest devices ready to his hand. It is as though a cricketer were armed with a special patent bat, designed to cope with every kind of ball or bowler; all he would have to do would be to learn how to work the gadgets. And indeed, what could any young man hope to achieve, having to work with an old-fashioned stage? . . . he must needs welcome every labour-saving device that ingenuity can contrive. The Stratford-on-Avon theatre has contrived these, and some fine mechanical results are to be expected.

GORDON GRAIG

P.S.—But how could I have forgotten the book! To me, it is a hateful piece of book production. When I say "hateful," it must not be thought that I bear any ill-will towards the publishers . . . I merely rage. An artist is allowed to rage, when wretched paper takes the place of good in a book—when mild, milk-and-water composition is used for a book dealing with a subject which can only be dealt with once in two or three hundred years—when the book is out to curry favour with the public . . . and so forth and so on.

But all these are but wild artist's words . . . you know the type . . . and the type of book.

Judged as representing a theatre—with a few minor defects—the book matches the theatre very nicely indeed. There are no drawings and engravings, as there should be, by our foremost British draughtsmen and craftsmen, such as a few hundred people in our islands might have wished to see. But then there are only a few people who would have thought the subject worthy of anything of that kind; and perhaps there are not even a few who would have been willing to come forward and do the work. But

*And now lost.

Angels of Nativity. Detail from a painting in the Church of S. Domenico, Siena, by Francesco Di Georgio Martini. From *Francesco Di Georgio Martini of Siena.*

instead of that, we have some really excellent photographs by Mr. Yerbury. Photography associated with Shakespeare is always a mistake, but, as photography goes, these plates could not possibly be better.

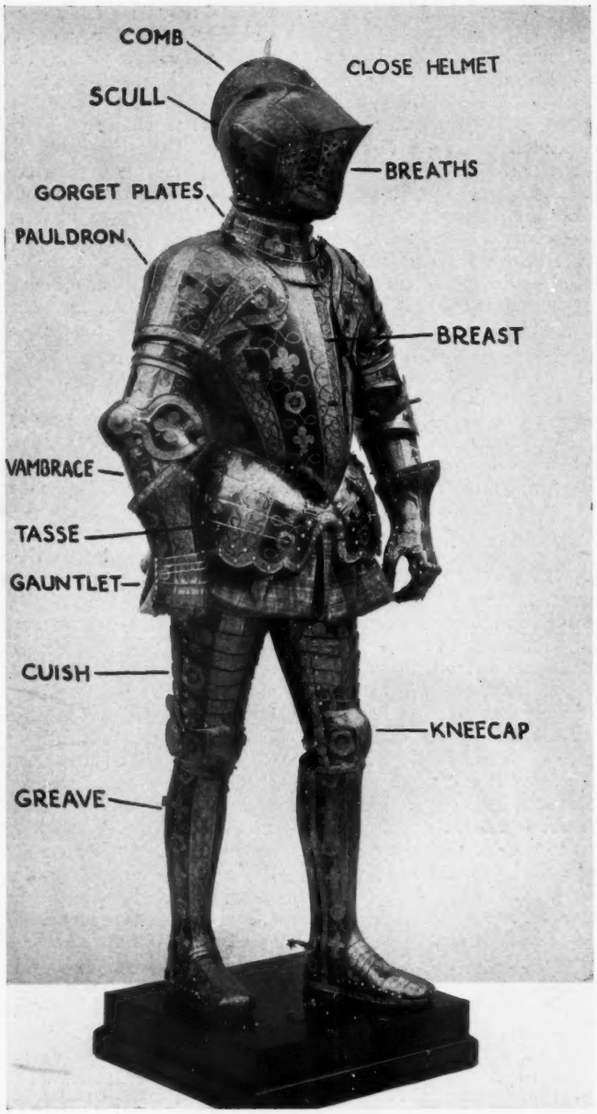
Then there are the diagrams. In ancient books of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, one always discovers what is written on diagrams . . . not so in this modern book. Fig. 41 on p. 49, for example. The proof-reader must have exploded, on seeing this page! But what would you? *a*, the loss of eighteen shillings might have entailed an entire revision of the contract; *b*, and it might have cost eighteen shillings to re-make this block. The block needed to be re-made, but there were those accursed extra shillings—and the year was 1933. And, in fact, taking it all in all, I doubt if any book comparable to this in paper, type, setting, binding, block-making and—presumably—distribution, has been produced at this price in the last tootle-tootle years.

An Italian Genius

FRANCESCO DI GEORGIO MARTINI OF SIENA. —By Selwyn Brinton, M.A. Volume I. London: Besant and Co. Price 12s. 6d. net.

THIS book deals with a universal genius of the Italian Renaissance who is surely, though he was painter, architect, sculptor and military engineer, one of its least known figures. Mr. Brinton attributes this partly to the indifference of Crowe and Cavalcaselle, to the supposition that his greatest picture, of which a detail is given on page 21, was by Signorelli, and to the general ignorance about Sienese painting in the past. Francesco was born in Siena in 1439, the son of a poulterer. He married and had a large family and shared a workshop with Neroccio till 1475. His chief paintings, remarkable for their resemblance to Botticelli, are two nativities, several virgins and an annunciation in Siena. There is only one, of Saint Dorothy, in the National Gallery, another of Saint Bernard in Liverpool, and a few in English private collections. His pictures are noteworthy for the beauty of the angels and his predilection for inserting pieces of Roman architecture. The one reproduced here is the corner of a Nativity. The angels have just alighted beside the Roman arch where St. Joseph stalls his ox and ass. On the other side of the picture are the Virgin and two swarthy shepherds. The great arch is riven in half across the centre and the elegant countryside is visible through it. At some time, probably between 1464-9 while working on the water supply of Siena he went to Rome, and his passionate interest in the ancient buildings turned him into an architect. There is a charming drawing by him of Pygmalion—a sculptor watching a nymph come to life out of his acanthus-crowned column—which might symbolize the ancient world reviving under the attentions of the new archæology. His drawings of what he saw remain and reveal several buildings, chiefly circular, long since obliterated, which may be restored by the present excavations in the forum. In 1477 he was summoned to the court of the great condottiere Federico, Duke of Urbino. This prince, who received the garter from Henry VII, and in whose beautiful palace Castiglione placed the scene of his "Courtier," employed him as architect—here he wrote his treatise on architecture—and as military engineer he designed the most impressive fortress of S. Leo, helped to perfect the bombard, and perhaps invented the bastion as the safest weapon of defence against it. The volume closes with a drawing of a young man floating in a life-belt, another languid in a diver's apparatus. Mr. Brinton is obviously a vocational biographer, with a great love and knowledge of his hero, but the book is a rather irritating one. In the early part, which deals with Francesco's life as a painter, there are too many references and not enough information about the artist, whose character is never once discussed. There are constant allusions to the author's other works and it seems a pity to issue separately a volume only one hundred pages long dealing with Francesco's painting or work on architecture, and leave the sculpture and buildings he designed to appear in another. The art criticism is of the "her feet seem to tread on air" or "we sense her a lovely blonde" variety, and one can sum up the book by saying that the subject is perhaps more interesting than the treatment.

C. C.



The armour of George Clifford, third Earl of Cumberland, made *circa* 1591. "Clifford distinguished himself among the commanders of the fleet opposed to the Spanish Armada in 1588. Elizabeth bestowed her glove upon him and he wore it ever after in front of his hat at public ceremonies." The armour is in possession of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Reproduced from *Elizabethan Pageantry*.

PENGUINS' WAY

Penguins have a dignity of carriage envious human beings have tried, but failed, to emulate. It is only right and proper, therefore, that their ceremonial parades in captivity should be along an *escalier d'honneur*, architecturally worthy of their judicial solemnity, instead of up and down the plebeian duckboard allotted to other water-fowl. And could a more stately one be imagined than that provided at the London Zoo (Lubetkin, Drake and Tecton, architects), which is at once a rampéd processional way, a hieratically adjustable diving-board and a suspension-bridge commanded at either end by a water-gate? Without a single intermediate support between wall and wall, its spiral turns and turns again, bewilderingly as an uncoiling mainspring, now dipping down to the water's edge, and then rising clear of it again with all the graceful lilt of a spinning top gathering momentum. Architecture? Engineering? Let us leave the question unanswered as tedious, since compared with these exciting and supremely appropriate forms the most famous of baronial "marble stairs" would probably seem just a little tawdry to an elegantly streamlined King Penguin.

The photograph is by John Havinden.

Dress in Elizabethan Days

ELIZABETHAN PAGEANTRY. A Pictorial Survey of Costume and its Commentators from c1560—1620. By H. K. Morse. Special Spring Number of *The Studio*. Price 7s. 6d. in wrappers, 10s. 6d. in cloth.

PERHAPS at no period of English history was the dress of fashionable men and women so extravagant as in the reigns of Elizabeth and James I. The friendship of Henry VIII with the French Court was responsible for the introduction to England of French fashions and resulted in such richness and magnificence of dress as to cause many heart-burnings amongst the moralists of the time. In his foreword, the author quotes Philip Stubbes, who said:

> . . . and hereby it appeareth that no People in the World is so curiouse in new fangles as they of England be. . . . So that it is verie hard to knowe who is noble, who is worshipfull, who is a gentleman, who is not, for . . . those which are neigther of the nobylitie, gentilitie, nor yeomanry . . . go dailie in silkes, velvets, satens, damasks, taffeties, and such like, notwithstanding that they be both base by byrthe, meane of estate and servyle of calling. This is a great confusion and a general disorder: God be mercyfull unto us.

Dress was an obsession—one might almost say a mania—with well-to-do people, the men vying with the women in a prodigality of sartorial display such as our present-day fashion experts may perhaps dream of, but will never see in reality. Men's coats and breeches were of velvet or heavy silk, lined with fur; their doublets were also richly trimmed and frequently covered richly embroidered shirts. In Elizabeth's time a lavish use was made of ornament and in the latter part of her reign women adopted the incongruous wheeled farthingdale, which consisted of a very full gathered skirt stretched out over a large hoop round the hips and falling from there straight to the ground. Bodices were stiff and peaked and sometimes lavishly embroidered with gold and jewels; large fan-shaped collars were also worn. This fashion persisted after her death and represented the peak of the orgy of extravagance; it was fortunately succeeded by a reactionary movement towards a simpler style during the latter part of the reign of James I.

The period is an amazingly interesting one for the student of costume and it is curious that on one has previously attempted to produce a popular record of it. For that reason alone Mr. Morse's volume is one to be grateful for. But he has earned our gratitude for much more than that. This book is no sketchy outline; it is a fully illustrated monograph on its subject, exceedingly well done, and published at a reasonable price. The illustrations, of which there are over eighty, have been collected from sources both at home and abroad, and with them is included a selection of most entertaining descriptions of the modes and manners of the period, together with, for the uninitiated, a glossary of terms relating to civil, professional, ceremonial, ecclesiastical and military costumes.

A. E. DOYLE.

A Guide to Canterbury Cathedral

CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL. By M. A. Babington. London: Dent. Price 2s. 6d. net.

IN a book of this type the author must either not attempt to be comprehensive, but concentrate on style and interesting continuity, or if he means it to be comprehensive, it must be well planned and systematically written. The real trouble with *Canterbury Cathedral* is inconsistency, in style and system.

The first portion of the book is a most interesting survey of the early history of the site of the cathedral and the various buildings which were erected in turn by St. Augustine, Lanfranc and William of Sens. On the foundations of a Romano-British church (the epithet is Mr. Babington's) a Saxon church was erected by St. Augustine (the African who brought Christianity to Britain). We read that Cuthbert in 758 built an additional church, and then, without any explanation, we read in the next paragraph, having ignored 200 years, that Odo found the cathedral in a ruinous state. It took three years to restore, but in 1011 it was partially destroyed by the Danes, and in 1067 was finally destroyed by fire. William the Conqueror appointed Lanfranc of Caen to be archbishop, and under his direction the cathedral was rebuilt. The choir was destroyed by fire in 1174, but one of the Norman towers remained standing till 1834 when it was wantonly dismantled.

After the murder of Becket and the publicity given to it, the cathedral became a paying concern, and extensive additions were made, including a magnificent palace where in 1573 Archbishop Parker had Elizabeth to dinner and gave her a "marvellous gold salt-cellar, adorned with a ship, also of gold, and having a great oblong diamond on the cover." A great change from the frugality and self-denial of the monks of Canterbury less than 200 years before, when at dinner "No noise is to be made; for instance, if there are nuts they must not be cracked with the teeth. Should he spill anything he has to go and do penance in the middle of the refectory, if strangers are not present."

So far the architectural account and historical record of the cathedral are almost complete. But at that century, as is the case of so many books of this type, the record ends, and the last four hundred years are glossed over in less than two pages. The continuity comes to an end, and sectional treatment begins, interesting at first, but eventually becoming a mere catalogue of monuments and tombs, etc., with at first a vain attempt at disguise.

As a comprehensive guide to Canterbury Cathedral, this book leaves nothing to be desired, but in addition the first half gives a real picture of life in Canterbury as the buildings grew. The architectural account is bound up inevitably with the social account, and great attention is paid to interior detail in special chapters.

Other ancient churches and buildings are mentioned in brief; and to the architect or the antiquary who is paying a visit to Canterbury, I would say there is no other church in which you can trace architectural history so clearly as in St. Martin's Church, where, it is claimed, services have been held continuously for more than 1,300 years. Finally—no one who has been, or is going, to Canterbury can afford to disregard this book.

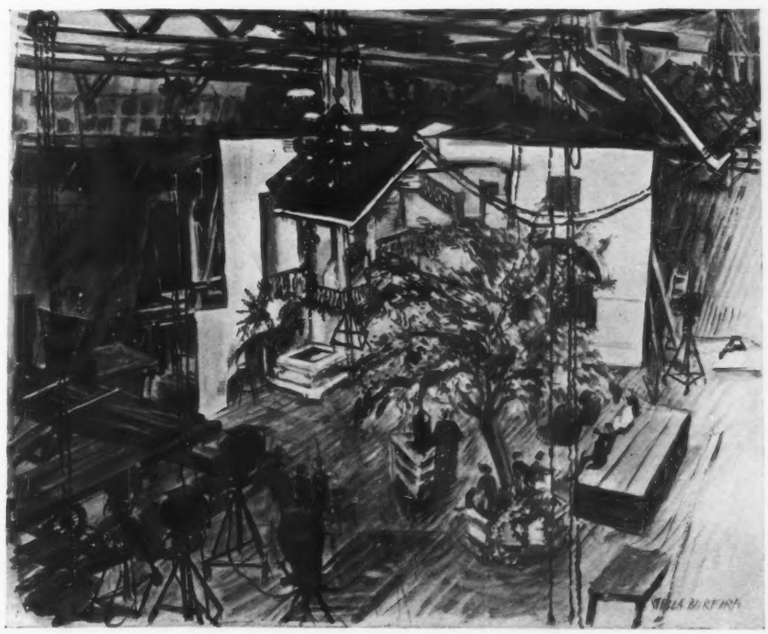
P. J. DUFF.

PAINTING

The Film Set

THE drawing in water colour reproduced below is by Stella Burford and shows a Viennese courtyard, designed by David Rawnsley, for "Blossomtime," now being made by British International Pictures, at Elstree. Richard Tauber takes the part of Schubert, Paul Stein is the director, and John Drinkwater wrote the dialogue. Roger Burford, the artist's husband, worked on the scenario.

The set, which is a large one, is dwarfed by the realistic tree in front of it: in the foreground another set is being cleared away. Production has not yet started, and the floor is still free of the lights, cables, cameras, fuse-



boxes and sound equipment which will soon cover it.

A floor is the unit of space in a film studio, each floor being a windowless sound-proof box. From the gantry, if the set is a large one, are trained the lamps: if a small one, they are fixed to the rail which runs outside of the construction. The boxes which round the hang from the roof contain banks of incandescent lights, and others stand on the floor.

The scenario writer gaily dictates the rubric SCENE 53, INTERIOR COURTYARD, DAY, and goes on to move his characters up steps, through doorways, under trees, by day or by night, in sun or in rain. The script is handed to the art director who, having decided upon the general style, analyses the requirements of the action, interpreting always with a view to the peculiarities of camera vision and the mechanics of lighting. His first sketches are submitted to the director, who may require modifications for particular angles or camera movements he has in mind. The art director goes on to design the architectural etceteras, and then supervizes the construction and chooses the furniture. A set costing several hundred pounds will take perhaps two days to build, will be used for two days, and then "struck." The material is nearly always plywood and fibrous plaster.

An exhibition of sketches of films in production is being held by Stella Burford at the Wertheim Galleries, 8, Burlington Gardens, W.1. It opened on June 18 for a fortnight. **A. B.**

A Free Commentary

By Junius

As I write the catch-as-catch-can score of the motorist for the week has dropped from 147 to 134. But there is every chance that by the time these words appear the average will be restored.

* * *

And only last night a broadcast appeal to citizen-pedestrians not to walk off the pavements without looking round, was illustrated by the case of a miscreant who did so and was very properly killed for his pains by a car which had no choice between running into the traffic on the one hand, or killing the pedestrian on the other, and presumably chose the pedestrian as the softer thing.

* * *

But death is a rather heavy penalty to pay for absent-mindedness, and unless we are prepared to stand by the proposition that the absent-minded are better dead, then *while the habits of citizens are still being formed* in the better understanding of the dangers, and until the custom which emphasizes them of foot passengers passing each other on the left, and so facing oncoming traffic, shall have been established, it seems to me that anybody who is driving at such a pace near the kerb that he cannot fail to kill his man should he step off suddenly, is obviously driving too fast for public safety.

* * *

It is customary to talk as if the experiment to make people pass to the left, which was tried some time ago, and which failed, proves the futility of attempting to establish such a custom. It proves no more than that the campaign was insufficiently prepared and backed—which was notoriously the fact.

* * *

This perpetually recurring type of trouble, and the particular fact that the Minister of Transport has been deploring the much too general ignorance of the Highway Code, tempts me to take an old bee out of my bonnet and stroke it.

* * *

Why should not advertising be taxed—not in matter but in kind? That is to say that, at choice, space not exceeding so much (say a tenth) of the most popular full page of any given paper should be claimed by Government on (say) the first Monday of the month (or on every quarter-day) for the purpose of simultaneous and professionally prepared summaries of the essentials of any new legislation or of any announcement shrewdly affecting the public weal.

* * *

The special worth of this bee does, I admit, depend on the assumption which seems to me to be broadly justified: that on the given day (provided the days be not unduly multiplied and the successive governments play fair) on which the national announcements appear the remaining nine-tenths of the space on the chosen page will, because of its exceptional interest-compelling value, be as valuable as, or more valuable than, the whole ten-tenths on a normal day. The advertiser will, it is presumed, be willing or glad to pay as much as, or more than, he pays for the full ten-tenths. Which is to say, if my psychological calculation be well founded, the space for promulgation of laws and necessary public weal announcements *can be had for nothing.*

* * *

This creation out of nothing is, of course, possible only because advertising space has no absolute and fixed, but only contingent expanding or contracting value dependent entirely on psychological factors. It would be the business of the trained professional publicity experts in the service of the Ministry of Information to present their case and manipulate their material so as to command for the setting of their messages this extra value; to translate the unimpressive idiom of formal documents into the bright living phrases now reserved for trade announcements.

* * *

Taxes on advertising are always denounced (by those who live by advertising) as a strangling of business. But here is a tax which, besides costing nothing *ex hypothesi*, crowns advertising with the bay-leaves of official recognition.

* * *

The de-jargonizing of their material and the fitting it for the different types of mentality reached by the different media, would be child's play to the skilled advocates of the advertising profession.

* * *

And talking of jargon, I wonder if this communication which I received from a distinguished bank (one of the Big Four, in fact) seems as unilluminating to you as it does to me. Probably not. You know all about this sort of thing. But to me it seems a fine instance of confusing business jargon (the words which were written in by hand on the printed form are here set in italics).

X Y Z Bank,
W. Branch.

Sir,—

I beg to return to you the undermentioned . . . *cheque* . . . which has been returned to me unpaid by . . . . *X Y Z Bank*. . . . I have charged the amount to the debit of your account.

£x 0 0 . . . . on . . . . *Temple Bar* . . . . drawn by . . . . *Messrs. Blank*. . . .

Answer. . . . *Discharge must not be wholly on stamps.*

I am, Sir, etc.

* * *

I may say that my wife found this document completely and absolutely incomprehensible. Concentrating my superior male brain on the matter, I discovered that the discharge in question was nothing unpleasant, but only what I had hitherto always assumed was known as my endorsement, or more simply my signature; and it had been almost wholly but not quite I would point out—there was a nice little flourish running out on to the paper—written upon the two penny stamps which, as in duty bound, I had affixed as the first of the taxes on my hard-earned fees.

* * *

I had no notion (I have now, but that's by the way), why I couldn't discharge wholly upon the stamps if I liked. Would somebody lick them off and try to discharge some other cheque with them? And as to the £22 being "charged to the debit of my account," I deduced, with some cunning, that it didn't mean that my money had been forfeited to the bank as penalty for my misdemeanour, but that between the time when the cheque had been "cancelled in error at Temple Bar" by the (as it seems to me) quite sensible cashier there, and the detection of the awful error (the poor rash canceller having been probably flung out on to the hard street) the £22 had been credited to me, and was now formally and temporarily taken away from me so that the X Y Z Bank should be able to sleep easy in its bed.

* * *

But what is that puzzling word "Answer" doing there. I had certainly asked no question, though I have since thought of several; nor had anybody else so far as I can guess; nor does the form of the letter seem to demand one.

* * *

I wonder if it's a proper, legal, integral and effective discharge when one discharges wholly off the stamps? To be on the safe side aforementioned cheque now bears three discharges, endorsements or signatures—the original one, wholly on (or alleged by the bank to be wholly on) the stamps; one wholly off; and one half on and half off. And I do hope now that all is lovely between me and the bank, that they'll take back the unfortunate cashier.

* * *

I find that a bouquet of sincere appreciation handed in last month's commentary to Mr. Noel Carrington, as editor of "Design for Today" should be shared by Mr. Anthony Bertram who "as from" the May issue of this year succeeded Mr. Carrington in the editorial chair.

1. The monumental manner survives, but heavy plaster ceilings are not essential to the sale of goods which are not made of plaster. The Display Room at Ideal House, Great Marlborough Street, London. Associated architects : Gordon Jeeves and Raymond Hood.

SHOWROOMS FOR BUILDING

DECORATION & CRAFTSMANSHIP

SUPPLEMENT JULY 1934

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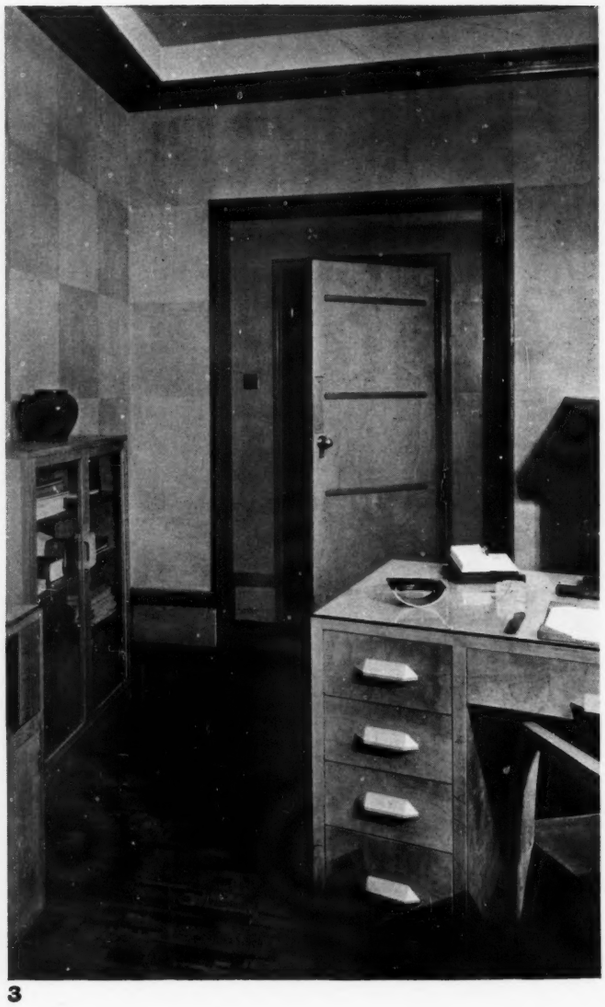

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2. The showroom of yesterday is the prototype of the showroom of today. One of the arches used as a glass store room by Messrs. James Clark and Son. In this arch is kept large stocks of opaque glass. Until recently it was only in such store rooms that architects could view the different glasses in any reasonable size.

3. The stockroom of the past gives place to material used in the course of business ; walls lined with plywood, furniture made in laminated board, tell the manufacturers' story, but a plywood floor would have emphasized the point. A room in Messrs. Venesta's offices. The walls are in squares of their birch, arranged at right angles to each other to give a chequerboard effect, with the grain going in different directions. The birch is fixed to lower-grade ordinary plywood. The flush door is in birch on one side and walnut on the other ; the architraves and mouldings round the door are painted. The desk and bookcase are in birch plywood. Designers : Louis de Soissons and G. Grey Wornum. Craftsmen : Venesta.

Showrooms for Building

By Leslie Mansfield

Showrooms, like notepaper, express the character of a business; they are the "background."

Twenty-five years ago time was less important; and when the office was dull it was amusing to spend an hour looking for a fireback, or to go to Bond Street and choose a print—just peaceful recreation. Today we must see new things in new ways and save time; this is progress traceable from the age of the stockroom, full of everything, to modernity which opens its new premises with cocktails served from 17.00 to 19.30. The result is display planned for realism to satisfy the modern mind.

The story as it affects the building world is one of arrangement applied to innumerable articles of vastly different size and purpose. In the past the bath manufacturer was expected to "carry" some 90 different patterns of bath; these required space in the broad sense of the word, and a vast and lofty apartment of much dignity appeared to be the logical solution; a departure from the stockroom only in so far as walls, ceilings, etc., were concerned—but a step forward. The same idea, on occasions, reached great heights and produced arcading filled in with massive wrought iron gates as a screen, punctuated with beautiful cabinets for the display of raw materials in carefully labelled bottles, vastly important when there was little to show, but distracting in these crowded days. An excellent example of this, completely impressive, may be found in Horseferry Road at the headquarters of The Gas Light and Coke Company. Here is a showroom designed years ago by a man who understood the problems of his day just as much as the other man now converting a ground floor and basement in Sloane Street, 22, to show the Company's latest goods in a modern setting. These premises are not yet finished, but acquaintance with the "father" as a preliminary to friendship with the "son" should be instructive and profitable. The brick merchant who dealt with a number of yards thought it wise to collect his samples in one room, and realising that a brick is a dull thing alone, evolved the dummy roof, the tile hung panel and the sample wall complete with felt to imitate the joint: an admirable effort but with limited appeal, 4. The fireplace merchant is one exception. He has always assembled his wares even at the expense of a certain insecurity in his display. His problem has been simple for he can handle a complete arrangement, 10. There are many others who find things different, but it is not from the showroom itself that development has sprung. It was the exhibition habit which first made the change. Manufacturers and distributors discarding the muddled collection method, adopted the more orderly arrangement of the stand, design crept in, special features were created for the occasion, and by realism public interest, as distinct from trade, was stimulated, the type of buyer changed, and the manufacturer was forced to cater more for the inexperienced eye than the trained imagination; so the showroom planned for display has become a necessity and return to the other methods impossible. The old-established house is beginning to realize this and firms like Boldings have gone so far as to convert that space, so well known to the "customer from the country," into a spacious hall for the display of their finest products; others are doing the same thing, and in time it is hoped that the building world will have as much to show as other people.

The showroom is a place where you go to buy something. Few go there for fun; and whether irksome or not the visit is more diverting if the surroundings, the general atmosphere, be pleasant; to attain this everything must be practical, not austerely so, just friendly. A well-lettered price-ticket, decorative value apart, is more desirable than a label covered with hieroglyphics. Compare The National Gallery, where every exhibit is clearly labelled, with the Tower of London. Here the visitor is confronted with rows of numbers conveying nothing to the man who does not buy a catalogue; a museum is a showroom, after all.

A "precious" cover on a chair is worse than no chair at all, a boarded floor infinitely preferable to a carpet in the absence of an ash tray. Curtained windows have their uses, they do not inflate overheads; they diffuse the light and soften the display. Briefly, furnishing is important, and it does not end with tables and chairs; it embraces the fitment, and the one introduced into the showrooms of James Clark, 8, is an admirable piece designed to assist the customer and save the salesman time. The word "fitment" may be said to cover the dummy wall found in the rooms of the fireplace manufacturer; this, although it is not obvious, is usually constructed with a series of recesses designed to take any fireplace and facilitate rapid change while preserving a sense of permanency in display. The wallpaper manufacturer by the use of "flats" hinged to a wall adopts a similar method, which would be more convincing if arranged triptych wise, each leaf diminishing as to width but constant in height. This would display three wall sections, imitate the end of a room and be more natural. The customer likes this sort of thing! All this needs planning, not only the actual arrangement, the layout, the colour scheme, but also the movements of the visitor, for nothing is more disconcerting than to land suddenly, as it were, from a parachute into the middle of a wide floor space open to attack from any quarter. It is better, if undesirable, to find progress barred by a formidable counter or little window labled "Enquiries." Such obstacles are, to say the least, protection for the customer, albeit mentally disturbing; a well-planned showroom should avoid these snares, be adaptable to change and never crowded.

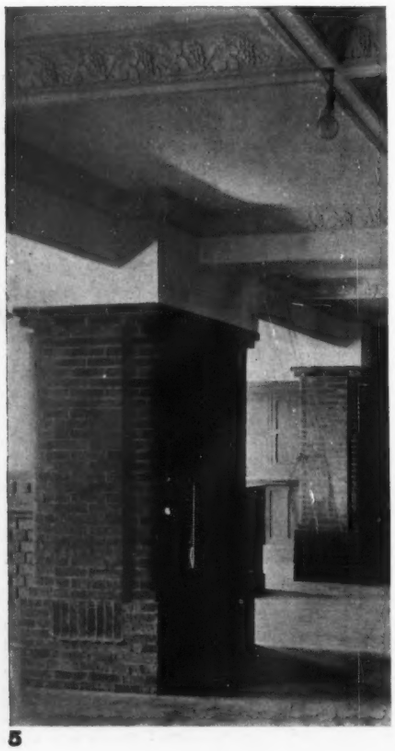
The exhibition has to a large extent produced the showroom of today. It has become the experimental ground of the trade and given realism to display; with closer relationship tothe exhibition it will produce that foundation or starting point which is desired. It is pathetic to meet a beautiful exhibit, home from an exhibition, tucked away on a backstairs because there is no room for it in the showrooms. Such an episode proclaims lack of liaison, is waste, and demonstrates the need of planning. Also careful study of that which is, after all, a temporary experiment, will produce valuable data in the perfection of the more permanent display at home.

There are no hard and fast rules that can be laid down to cover the showrooms of the building world. But it is safe to say that the old London house provides, in some cases, a better basis from which to work than the open space of the constructed showroom. With three rooms on a floor, subdivision is simple: two for display and one for office, all with access to the

4. A temporary arrangement in semi-realism has advantages; the joints between the brickwork are formed with thick grey felt or composition building board. The showrooms of Messrs. W. T. Lamb and Sons. Some eighty different varieties of oven bricks and a number of roofing tiles have been built up to show the finished effects in different colours and sizes.

6

5. It is possible to clothe the existing structure and produce display. Stancheons provide an excellent opportunity to those who distribute bricks. A detail of Messrs. Lamb's showrooms. **6.** A cooker in its natural surroundings is more interesting than if it were placed on a pedestal. An Aga kitchen in light fawn and scarlet, in a setting designed by Mrs. Darcy Braddell.



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landing. This is important. The defects common to most constructed areas are (*a*) the single entrance, (*b*) the presence of the column, (*c*) the absence of window lighting. (*a*) is undesirable because all business is not done in the showroom, some people want the office; (*b*) cramps the designer, limits his freedom of arrangement; (*c*) is bad because top light throws uncomplimentary shadows. To arrange, replan three rooms in an historic house in Albemarle Street, to display glass as the British Vitrolite Company have done, 17, 18, 21, and leave them, so to speak, as they were, is an achievement possible only to one capable of handling material and its setting with sympathy and great understanding. Problems of the French Revolution were debated in these rooms; they, the rooms, have survived to serve another age, but they were handled properly. Conditions are individual, and governed by the nature of the goods, the space available, status of the business and so on; yet there is one factor common to all—the customer, and it is his comfort and convenience which is all important. How to attain this is the first problem. The surest way to arrive at a solution is by analysis of his movements, and it will be found that the small details are more important than the general scheme, layout and tour of inspection excepted.

The customer wants to see the goods as they will look at home and alternatives—samples are necessary as well as the drawing; and, if the salesman is remembered, accessibility is as important as a ready means of quick display. This opens a vast field for research in which every distributor has his opportunity. Soane invented an ingenious method for storing and showing his pictures. This can still be seen in his house in Lincoln's Inn Fields. He studied lighting at the same time, and has left behind him food for thought. A visit to the Soane Museum might solve a problem if the movable screen-like walls upstairs be considered, inquisitively. The problem of accessible display which is interchangeable has not been tackled except in very isolated cases, because the manufacturer has not begun to think of such things. Glass is a comparatively new material, at least in the way we use it to-day. So it is in this trade that clever schemes of sliding doors glazed, with samples to be looked at or looked through, are found, 15. Carters of Poole first introduced the idea of a sliding panel at an exhibition some time ago, but few have developed the theme. As to arrangement, overcrowding is fatal; isolation, even if restricted, more valuable, for it is important to encourage concentration, the one thing most desirable in a customer. This

7

7. The modern non-reflection window puts the showroom into the street. The front of the Westminster Electric Supply Corporation's showrooms in Victoria Street, London. The front is metal-faced plywood, painted light yellow and grey, with stainless steel framing members, black marble skirting, and yellow and grey rubber floor. The lettering is outlined in pale blue neon tube lighting with the Westminster device in red.

Architects: Adams Thompson and Fry.
Craftsmen: (for the non-reflection window), Pollard and Company.

8. The fitment designed to take samples, catalogues, drawings, etc., is an essential part of some showrooms. A corner of Messrs. James Clark and Son's showroom, showing part of the mahogany cabinet displaying smaller samples, literature, and having a set of drawers displaying colour sketches and technical drawings of work carried out.

Designers: James Clark and Son.
Craftsman: E. J. Dickinson.

8

9. Another advantage of the non-reflection window is that it enables the timid to inspect the goods displayed. Looking into the showroom of the Parkinson Stove Company through the non-reflecting windows.
Architect: Walter Tapper.
Craftsmen: (for the windows), Pollard and Company.

10. It is not wise to overcrowd the middle ground and detract from the interest of looking beyond, especially if that interest is great. The ground floor showrooms of Messrs. Bratt Colbran and Company.
Architect: The late Duncan Tate of Forbes and Tate.

11. The use of other people's goods is advantageous if they embellish the display. The piece of pottery has been chosen with intelligence. The fireplace in the ground floor showrooms of Messrs. Bratt Colbran and Company.
Designer: (for the fireplace), W. S. Watts.
Craftsmen: Bratt Colbran and Company.

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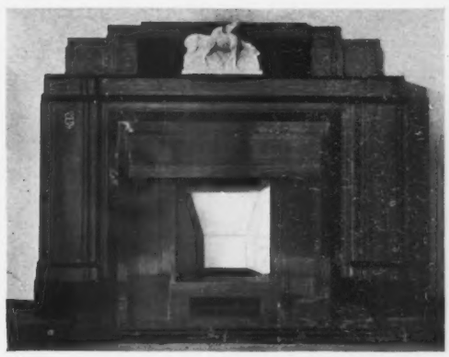

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12. The American considers the problem from a different point of view; besides, motor-cars are larger than baths. A showroom on the ground floor of Devonshire House, Piccadilly, London.
Associated architects: Carrère and Hastings and C. H. Reilly.
Craftsmen: Holland and Hannen and Cubitts.

13. Glass provides innumerable opportunities for display. In this case accessibility to the sample has been remembered. The showroom of Messrs. Chance Brothers. The windows and glazed screens have been utilized for showing different varieties of window glass. The central show table, designed by M. L. Anderson, displays blown and pressed glass, and is of half-inch birch plywood with walnut veneer; the floor is in birch plywood in 2 ft. squares and the walls covered in wood-veneer paper.
The architects of the showroom were L. H. Bucknell and Ruth Ellis.
Craftsman: George W. Newman.

14. Light must be shown in relation to other things and should be used carefully with a purpose. A curved window-bay in the entrance showroom of the Kensington and Knightsbridge Electric Lighting Company. There is a space between the curved window and the outer wall which allows artificial lighting to be manipulated in addition to natural daylight. Behind the glazing, which is sandblasted fluted sheet, there is a curved length of goliath 2 in. diameter neon tube as well as several floods.
Architect: Raymond McGrath. Craftsmen: Trollope and Sons.

15. Realism in display is an advance. The sliding doors on the left are a ready means to display diffused glass. The laylight over the lunch counter is another method of doing the same job. The glass showroom of Messrs. James Clark and Son, in which is shown over three hundred different types of glass and work on glass, in addition to various model rooms panelled in glass.
Designers: James Clark and Son. Craftsman: E. J. Dickinson.

16. The comfort of the customer is all important; the map is decorative and interesting. The reception lounge of the showrooms of the Westminster Electric Supply Corporation was designed to be an introduction to the Main Sales areas and is dominated by a large scale map in colour, designed by T. Lee-Elliott, of the Corporation's supply area.

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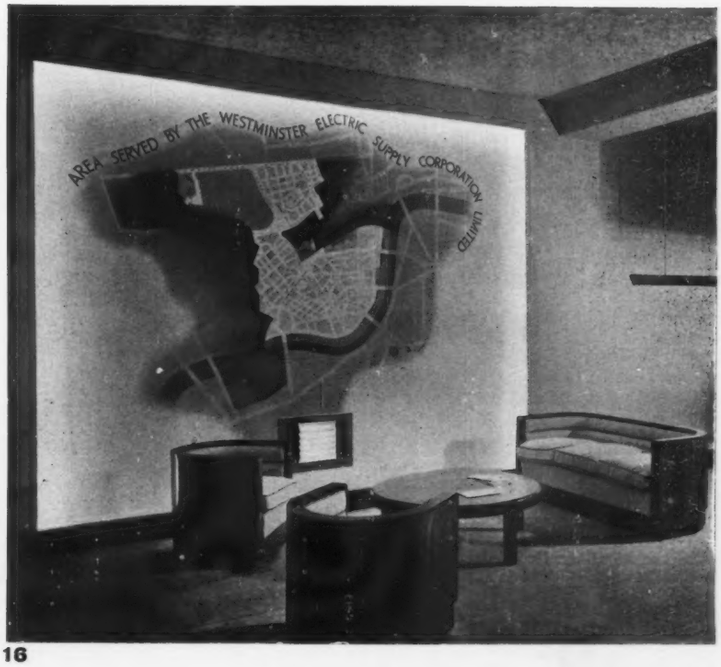
AREA SERVED BY THE WESTMINSTER ELECTRIC SUPPLY CORPORATION LIMITED

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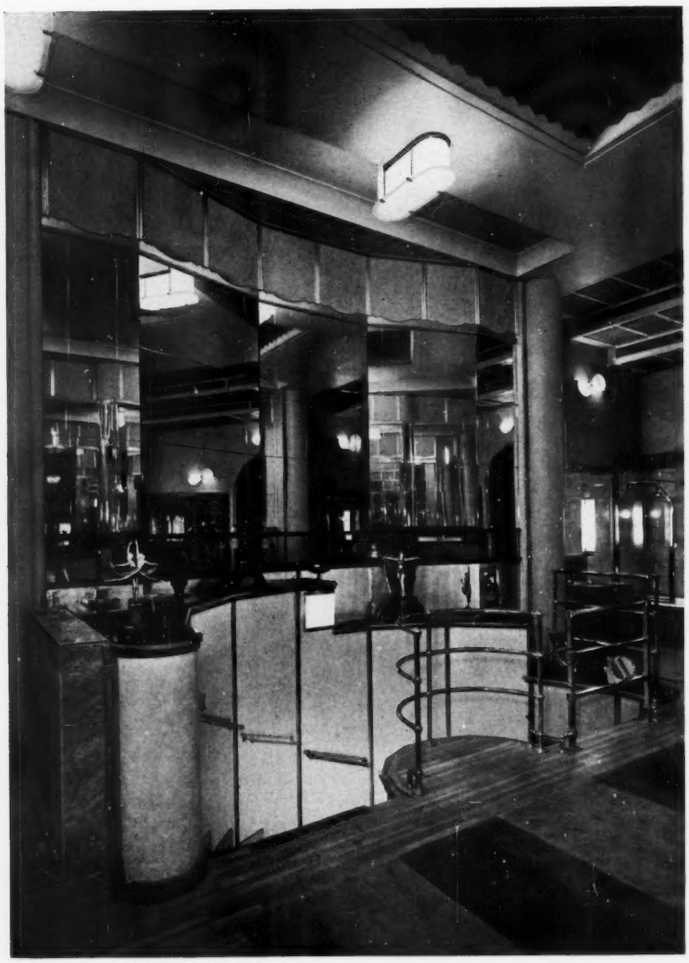

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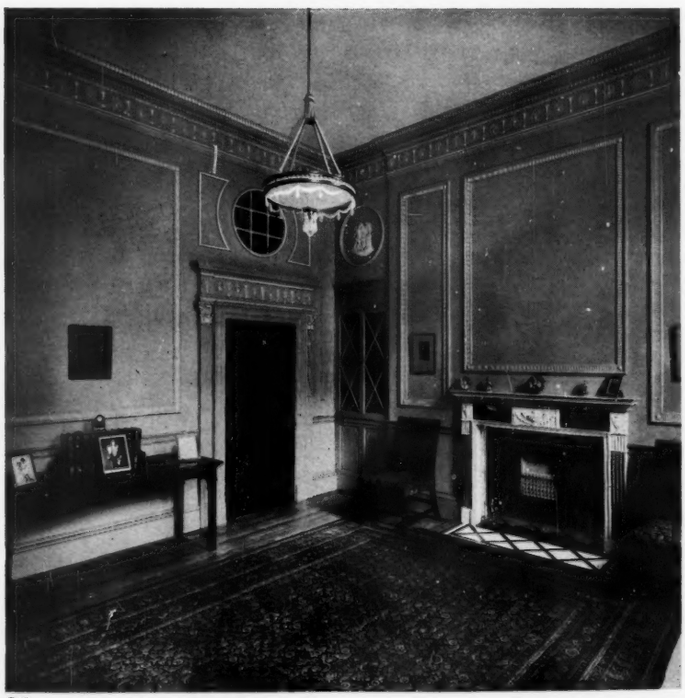

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17. Glass fitments sound dangerous, but handled as furnishings in a proper setting, all is well. Verticality is the keynote of the arrangement. A detail of the showrooms of Messrs. Vitrolite designed for the display of their products. The shaped tops of the fitments are in ¾ in. black glass. The table in the foreground is also in black glass, with a centre strip sandblasted on the underside and illuminated by means of table lamps.

18. It is sometimes useful to suggest ways of using your goods. This cocktail counter in Messrs. Vitrolite's showrooms is not invaluable for other purposes in a showroom.
Architect: Kenneth Cheesman. Craftsmen: The British Vitrolite Co.

19. The stairway to another floor is always difficult to handle: this is an intelligent treatment. The use of towel rails as a balustrade is practical in a showroom. Messrs. Froy's showrooms. The staircase, set against a wall of mirror glass, leads to the lower floor. The handrail is composed of grab-rails of steel and glass elements ingeniously adapted for the purpose.
Architects: Stanley Hall and Easton and Robertson.

20. The old house provides in some cases a basis for a showroom, but the period should not be allowed to dominate the goods. One of the rooms of the showrooms of the Davis Gas Stove Company, in which there is an Adam mantel with a gas fire fitted in a surround, specially designed and carried out in rustless steel.
Architect: Michael Tapper. Craftsmen: The Davis Gas Stove Co.

is possible even in the gallery, where goods are shown side by side and can be obtained by contrast. "I don't like that" is a remark often heard; it means "I am not interested" and suggests a desire to concentrate on something else. Isolation, like contrast, if carried to an extreme is not helpful. An association of ideas is more important; a cooker arranged complete with draining boards in a kitchen layout is attractive because it is more real than if placed on a pedestal as a memorial to the manufacturer; it becomes a working unit of the household and ceases to be just a cooker; it is seen, maybe, as it will appear at home, 6.

This suggests the use of other people's goods to dress your own display, and it is curious that a practice so common to the exhibition has not drifted to the showroom, more particularly when it is realized how closely the members of the building trade are related one with another. Above all, it is important to the customer: A metal window screwed to a movable frame on wheels is a terrible thing divorced from its surroundings and difficult to understand, but fixed in linings and clothed with curtains it becomes natural. It may be said that this is the method of the theatrical producer, but why not use it? The wig by Clarkson is, after all, part of the play, interchangeable; and is not interchangeability a concern of the shopkeeper? And while it is clear that no firm can achieve this by pulling its premises to pieces every few months to show something new, it is possible that a subtle use of the art of the stage could achieve much and the window-dresser need not be entirely ignored—such people think in terms of temporary power and it is not too much to say that permanency has far too great a hold even in the most up-to-date showrooms of today, particularly in regard to artificial lighting. This must be dealt with definitely, either as a permanent scheme giving maximum distribution of illumination, or in such a way as will provide the greatest possible variation; fittings, unless they be part of, or illustrate, the products of the business, should be unobtrusive and in no way compete with the general scheme. It is most disturbing to have to explain that we do not sell those things.

Much use can be made of illuminated

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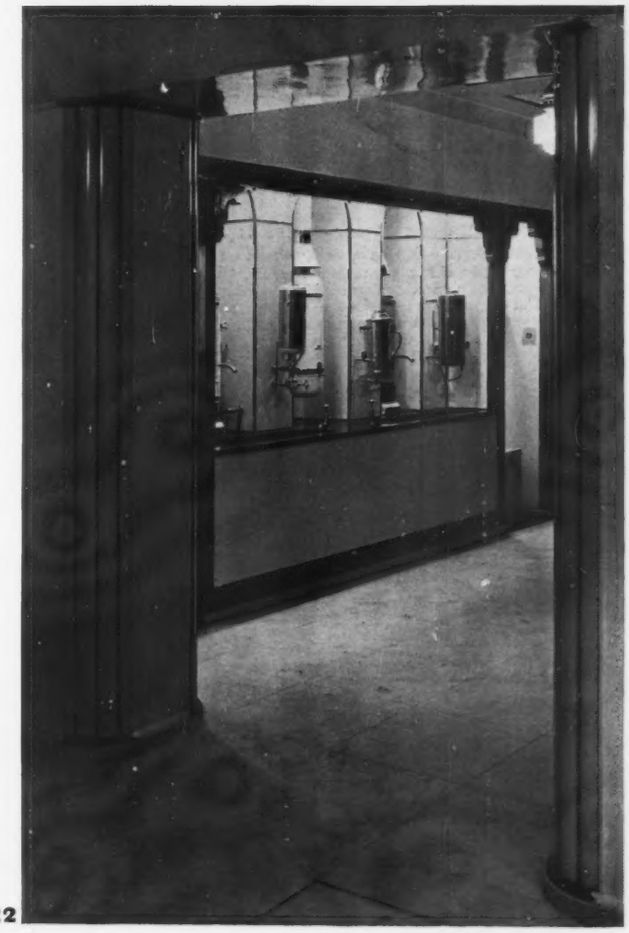

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21. In this case the material dominates the period, but does not destroy it. The fireplace group in the main showroom of Messrs. Vitrolite. The decorative panel, in a single sheet, was designed by Siegmund Pollitzer. The lines of the design are acid embossed and painted. On the right, in the foreground, is one of the four floodlight pylons by which the showroom is lighted.
Architect: Kenneth Cheesman.

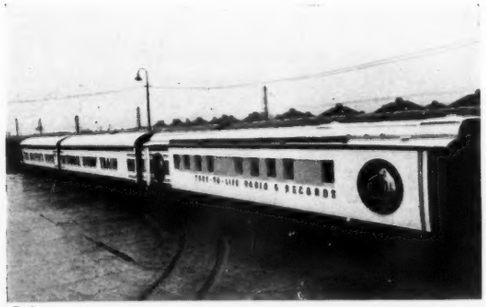
22. An orderly arrangement of working models is useful to the salesman and satisfactory to the customer. A display of new water heaters in the showrooms of The Gas Light and Coke Company in Sloane Street, London. The heaters are arranged to connect up and give a practical working demonstration. The heaters run into a stainless steel trough.
Architect: Walter Tapper.

23. **The architect's showroom is his plan chest and photograph album. Accessibility is vital and tidiness important. Tomorrow this may change—then there will be another problem.** The studio of the architect, Professor Karl Schneider of Hamburg, in which the materials are mahogany plywood and laminated board.

24 and **25.** **The showroom of tomorrow presents an entirely different problem.** The showroom of the national show train for His Master's Voice is designed and decorated in chromium rose and cream, by the H.M.V. Display Department. It represents a successful attempt to eliminate the corridor effect in a train. More than thirty different radio and gramophone instruments can be seen and heard in operation. The whole train includes modern sleeping accommodation, kitchen, cafe restaurant, workshop and mobile power station.

display in showrooms where glass is part of the trade, and lighting built into ceilings is a valuable asset in the dark corners of the showroom area ; lighting, however, is not of paramount importance, particularly in these daylight-saving days when, for many months of the year, illumination is unnecessary.

It is curious also that so little use has been made of the model ; nothing is more attractive, if properly handled, and the cost of production need not be heavy, at all events to those who possess a studio. Admitted the use of models is restricted and cannot apply in many cases, but they are valuable for the alternative display of composite settings. Some customers cannot read a drawing. A temporary " dress out," even if full size, is but a model. Models must be realistic or frankly impressionistic ; a plaster leg of mutton in crude colour is an offence and completely nauseating. But models should never be shown in the general display ; they are distracting and encourage the childlike nature of human beings to the detriment of the salesman ; as window-dressing they are a never-ending source of attraction. This is but a detail, a small fraction of a problem complicated by the latest development, the non-reflection shop window, which has done away with the window display, destroyed privacy, and put the showroom, as it were, into the street, 7, 9. How far this is good one cannot say ; it is an advance demanding a different treatment from the past ; in short, display planned, and designed, as a picture in a frame. But there is yet another development which must be remembered —the travelling showroom, the railway train, 24, 25, the caravan, etc. Here is a sales force with an unlimited future and capable of vast development. It is a definite solution of the problem of approach as applied to the country trader who cannot, or will not, come to town. Unfortunately such methods are not within the reach of the average manufacturer and consequently he is forced to adopt local representation which may, or may not, be efficient. One thing is certain, he cannot control the local display and consequently the goods may lack appeal. But with the travelling showroom, worked on co-operative lines, the position would be different. Some people might object to such an invasion, but those interested in the goods would welcome the innovation as a definite advance from the day of the commercial traveller, complete with bag of tiny samples, and an unending stream of sales talk. Time wasted would become time saved and the buyer would see new things in a new way.



24

25

ANTHOLOGY

Rhymes on the Projected Western Improvements

AIR.—" *Oh ! what a town, what a wonderful metropolis !* "

Now is the time that the rage for building palaces
  Has seized upon our countrymen from high to low :
A sneer at Mr. Nash now held for paltry malice is ;
  His pillars and their pedestals are all the go.
None now grins at the architecture Nash-onal,
For Waterloo and Regent-streets have put it in the fashion all ;
And Mr. Nash, without a rival, at his work may quiet feel—
For no one can compare with him—not even Mr. Wyattville!
  Oh ! what a town, what a wonderful metropolis !
  Such a place as this *will* be, was never seen !

First and foremost, Mr. Nash attacks the *House of Buckingham*—
  (I don't mean the family so famed for fat) :
Round the palace there's to run a lengthy sort of duckingdam,
  For which effect the Serpentine comes in most pat :
The house itself is all to be of architecture Grecian,
A vast improvement surely on its present elevation :
And all the front, at present standing awkwardly and all awry,
Will form it seems, when all is done, a splendid picture-gallery.
  Oh ! what a town, etc.

The next of our improvements, is the total demolition
  Of that dingiest of palaces, called Carlton House :
Behind they intend to improve the Park's condition,
  (I hope they'll take an order to exclude the cows).
And next there's a change to be made upon old Charing-cross,
Where stands the wretched statue of a king upon a staring horse ;
And the palace of duke Smithson, who was lately our ambassador
To France, will be admired by many who at present pass the door.
  Oh ! what a town, etc.

What a grand square it will be, when Mr. Nash embellishes
  Its building with his columns never seen before,—
His towers and his steeples which our gracious Monarch relishes,
  But which make other folks laugh till their sides are sore !
In this new square we're to have a new-made Parthenon,
To replace that of Athens, which will vanish from the earth anon :
The College of the Heralds is to be another ornament,
And the whole of its buildings are to form a *gran contorno* meant.
  Oh ! what a town, etc.

Saint Martin's church will then be seen ; the College of Physicians
  Appropriately lift its head near that church-yard ;
The old *King's Mews* are in the list of demolitions,
  (I don't mean the muse of Southey, pension'd bard).
Then next up rises the club-house, called the *Union*,
And near its site another club, which all must own a funny one.
My readers guess the club I mean : and surely all cry fie on
The *Athénée Royal*, whose *alias* is THE ATHENAION !
  Oh ! what a town, etc.

The next new street runs through the Seven Dails,
  (Where strangers often lose at once their watch and way) :
I never yet could navigate, in spite of sundry trails,
  My road through their windings, which lead folks astray.
St. Giles's all is sure to fall, and St. George's church in Bloomsbury
Will then be visible, though now its front St. Giles's gloomsbury :
And we shall gain a sight, at least, of the door of the Museum,
With other vast improvements—Well, I hope we soon shall see 'em !
  Oh ! what a town, etc.

NEWS OF LITERATURE

FROM THE SPIRIT OF PUBLIC JOURNALS FOR THE YEAR MDCCCXXV **[*Sherwood, Gilbert and Piper, 1826*]**

MARGINALIA

METHODIST MODERNISM

The *Birmingham Post* recently published this illustration, describing its subject as a " New Style of Methodist Church." It was explained that " to meet the needs of a down-town area in which ecclesiastical architecture makes little appeal, the trustees and congregation . . . adopted an unusual architectural style . . . Situate near a cinema and a dance hall, the new buildings of the Sumner Hill Methodist Hall at Monument Road will be almost as secular in appearance as their neighbours, with the result, it is hoped, that those unaccustomed to church-going will be less self-conscious at the thought of entering." An interesting example of psychological functionalism.

CIVIC CONSCIOUSNESS

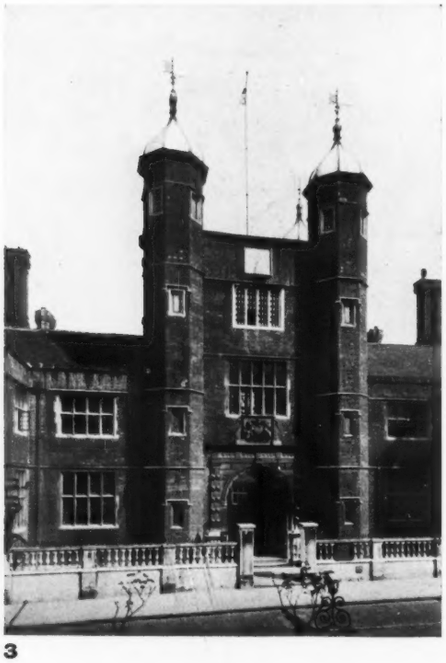
Last month we published the first instalment of our illustrated serial on the architectural perceptions of civic authorities. Here is the second and final selection, which reinforces the impression that the majority of the town clerks, to whom we made application for examples of the chief architectural treasures, old and new, under their jurisdiction, is imbued with a sense of civic responsibility that should encourage the optimism of all those who are interested in planning and the preservation that is derived from planning.

1

AYLESBURY

1. Church Street "has great charm and contains most interesting specimens of seventeenth and eighteenth-century domestic work," and **2,** modern buildings sustain Aylesbury's tradition for architectural comeliness. A new wine store. (*Architect:* H. Crookes.)

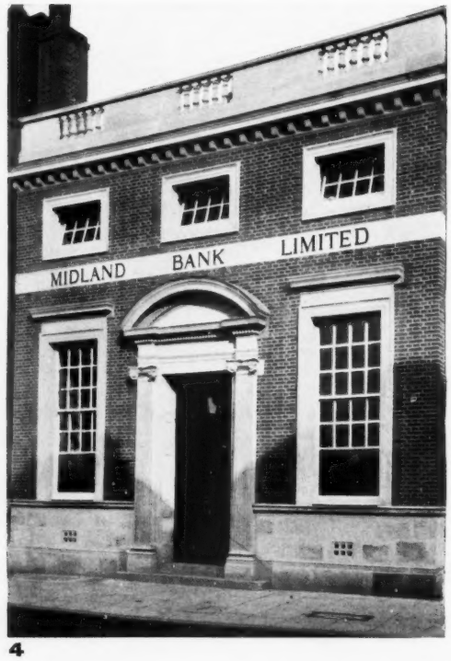
2



3

GUILDFORD

3. The Abbot's Hospital in the High Street, and to represent the twentieth century **4,** the Midland Bank. (*Architects:* Whinney, Son and Austen Hall.)



4

5

LANCASTER

5. Lancaster Castle is the star turn architecturally, and the modern achievement of the greatest merit is, according to local authority, **6,** the extension of the Lancaster Royal Grammar School. (*Architect:* Stephen Wilkinson.)

6

CIVIC CONSCIOUSNESS [*Continued*]

7

EXETER

7. The Guildhall was selected by Exeter, and to stand for the present time, the new City Library, **8,** was chosen. (*Architect:* Sydney Greenslade.)

8

9

BRISTOL

That urbane Georgian city chooses St. Mary's Redcliffe, **9,** and the Neo-Georgian Gothic University, **10,** for its old and new architectural treasures. (*Architects:* Oatley and Lawrence.)

10

DERBY

11. The Cathedral was Derby's choice for antique distinction in architecture, and the admirably planned Omnibus Station, **12,** is considered to be the modern achievement that has full architectural honours. (*Architect:* C. H. Aslin.)

11

12

CIVIC CONSCIOUSNESS [*Concluded*]

13

BATH

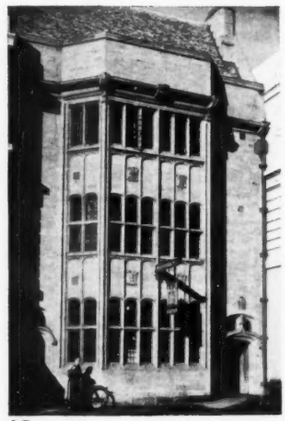
13. The Royal Crescent, of course, though the Circus was in the selection. All Bath is an architectural treasure. **14.** The Kingsmead flats, part of the City's improvement scheme, is the contemporary contribution. (*Designed by* Frank P. Sissons, the City Engineer.)

14

15

WOLVERHAMPTON

15. St. Peter's Collegiate Church was picked out as the chief jewel in Wolverhampton's architectural amenities, and (Neo-Georgian Gothic again) the Giffard's Arms Hotel, **16**, is "a most pleasing building," and was erected in 1929. (*Associated Architects:* the late Fred T. Beck and Jas. A. Swan.



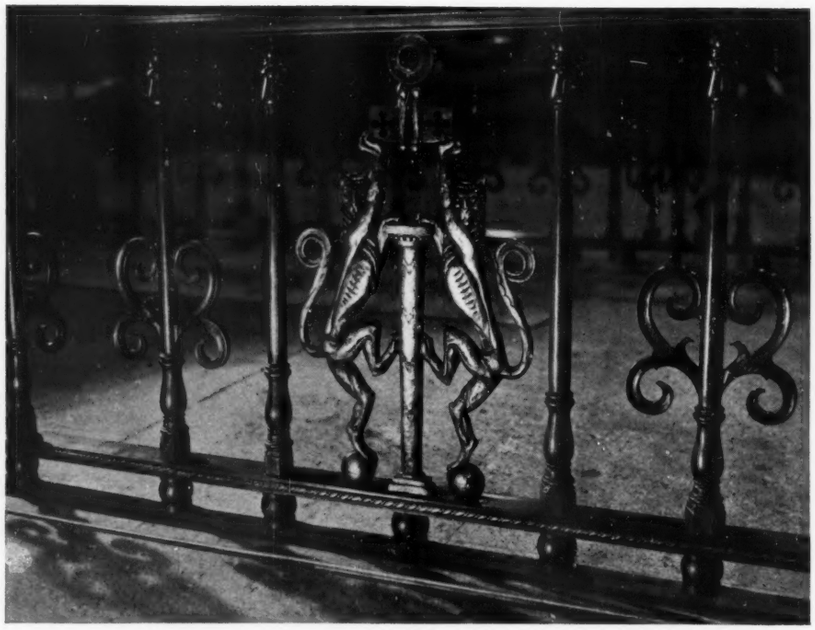
16

THE END

"ORIGINAL, BUT NOT TOO MODERN." Described as "an original, but not too modern design," this house has recently been built for the Rev. Dr. and Mrs. Bouquet, in Madingley Road, Cambridge. It is built of OLD, local, hand-made brick, and the roof tiles are the result of reviving an OLD local industry. A piece of OLD plaster work, dated about 1530, is inset in the hall, and was originally in the banqueting hall of Gilling Castle, Yorks, after which the house is named. This, if such a phrase may be coined, opens up vistas of undreamed-of architectural felicities, and the technique of using OLD, local, hand-made materials and incorporating antique oddments from ancient buildings, should provide adequate safeguards against the dangers of excessive modernism.

CORRIGENDUM

We regret that the illustration on this page, which appeared on page 225 of the June issue, was erroneously referred to as a wrought iron balustrade with bronze newels and handrail at the Law Courts, Belfast, and that the craftsmen were The Birmingham Guild. The illustration should have been described as a detail, taken in the shops before erection, of part of the balustrade, executed in cast bronze, to the staircase hall at the new Bank of England, and the craftsmen were Messrs. H. H. Martyn and Company Ltd., who made it at their Cheltenham works. The balustrade is an excellent example of bronze-work which retains all the quality and character of good casting as left from the sand without tooling or chasing.



A detail, taken in the shops before erection, of part of the balustrade to the staircase hall at the new Bank of England. This was executed in cast bronze from the models of Mr. Charles Wheeler by Messrs. H. H. Martyn and Company at their Cheltenham works.

Trade and Craft

ARTISTIC CONCRETE

One of the simplest yet most effective means of treating the exterior walls of a town or country house, factory, cinema, or indeed any structure, is the application of white or coloured cement rendering. Not only does the rendering constitute a form of decoration, but it also affords a watertight coating which protects the building from the elements.

In its dual capacity as a decorative and protective agent, a rendering is an excellent medium for the treatment of domestic structures. With estate developers competition is keen, and the external appearance of a house has become as vital a selling point as internal adequacy and workability. Even those with no claim to a sense of architectural beauty have become tired of the colourless pebble-dash and imitation oak beam. This was the standard form of treatment for countless houses in the post-war housing boom, and is to a great extent the cause of the drabness and dullness which permeates many of our suburbs. Repetition in design may, to a degree, be commercially necessary, but it can be offset by individuality in external treatment; white or coloured Portland cement rendering is one of the means of providing this distinctiveness.

Moreover, since a rendering can be made weatherproof, it is not essential to use high-grade brick as a backing; neither is it necessary to point the brickwork, so that the cost of a white or coloured finish is little, if any, more than that of building with facing bricks.

The availability of premixed white and coloured cements and special aggregate suitably graded for various classes of work has assisted considerably in increasing the popularity of cement rendered finishes. The ability to obtain in a *complete* form materials for coloured rendering has dispensed with the necessity of selecting suitable aggregate, buying pigments and cement separately, and mixing them together on the site—a process which, unless carried out with the utmost care, leads to uneven distribution of the ingredients and consequent patchiness in the finished work.

Colour — the first essential for an artistic rendering—may therefore be said to have been provided by the cement manufacturers. Character of surface, which is equally important, is entirely dependent upon the plasterer's skill.

Whilst the ordinary wood float finish, in which the small grains of sand are brought to the surface, gives a texture which is suitable for almost every type of work, it has a tendency to become monotonous, particularly if used for large areas. By reason of its plasticity, a rendering can be worked before it hardens out, so that almost any finish desired may be produced. Many effects are obtained merely by varying the method of placing the facing coat on the base coat; others rely upon the treatment of the facing coat when in position. The tools for carrying out the treatment are quite simple, and consist of trowels, wire or hair brushes, etc.

The major portion of the booklet, published by the Cement Marketing Company, Ltd., which is the inspiration of these notes, is devoted to descriptions of the methods of producing a number of finishes, each stage in the various processes being explained by illustrations; coloured plates are introduced to show the finished surfaces.

This booklet should provide architects and builders with useful ideas for external treatments, whilst it will be invaluable to plasterers engaged on work of this nature. Applications for copies of the booklet should be addressed to the Cement Marketing Company, Ltd., Portland House, Tothill Street, London, S.W.1.

MONEL METAL SINK DISPLAYS

The Aga Heat Company has opened a new showroom at 20, North Audley Street, London, W.1. A feature of special interest is a Monel Metal sink unit and Monel Metal dresser tops. Those who are interested can also inspect an excellent display of modern kitchen equipment.

SLEMISH FURNISHING LINENS

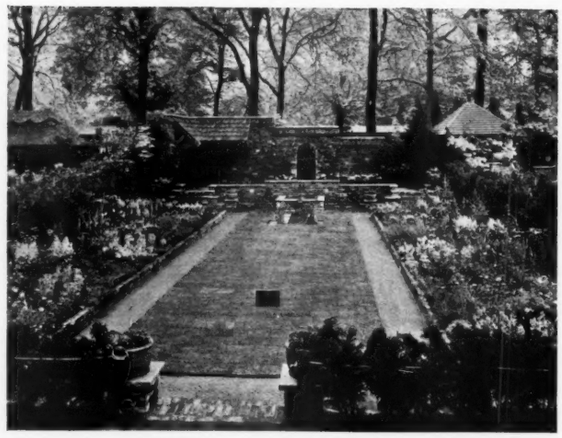
We have received from Messrs. "Old Bleach" Linens, Limited, an illustrated booklet showing some of the newer designs of their furnishing linens; a special display of these linens is also to be seen at their London showrooms at 47, Gresham Street, E.C.2. We are asked to extend to readers of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW a cordial invitation to visit the showrooms.

SOMETHING NEW IN ASPHALT

We are informed by The Limmer and Trinidad Lake Asphalt Company, Ltd., the manufacturers of Colourphalt (coloured asphalt), that its production is the sequel to requests which have been made to them for such a material over a period of years. Colourphalt is equally adaptable to floors and roofs, and its makers claim for it the great advantage of elasticity which enables it to absorb, without cracking, that slight movement which so often occurs when the inevitable expansion and contraction takes place in a concrete base. Its surface is jointless, odourless and dustless.

The manufacturers believe that whilst many people say that this is an "age of colour," the use of vivid designs for the internal and external decoration of buildings is not popular, and they have therefore confined the colours of their new material to red, brown, green and grey.

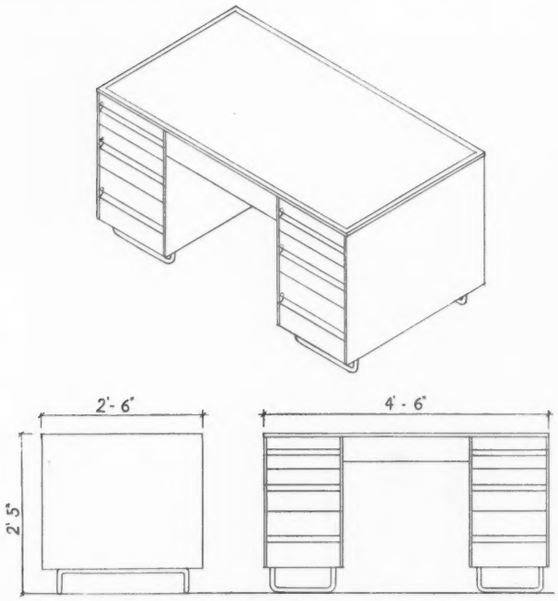
In addition to Colourphalt, the manufacturers have, in order to extend its appeal, introduced into it marble chippings of various grades and colours, and produced a material which they call Trinazzo. Full information and illustrations of the two products are included in a booklet, copies of which are available to anyone who is interested by writing to The Limmer and Trinidad Lake Asphalt Co., Ltd., Artillery House, Westminster, S.W.1.



The formal garden laid out by Messrs. W. H. Gaze and Sons, Ltd., at the 1934 Chelsea Flower Show.

A FORMAL GARDEN AT THE CHELSEA FLOWER SHOW

Messrs. W. H. Gaze and Sons, Ltd., who at the 1933 Show received the highest award for their Formal Garden exhibit, have sent us the accompanying photograph of the formal garden laid out by them at the Show this year. On the two sides are large borders of herbaceous flowers; the photograph, alas! gives a sadly inadequate idea of the glorious blaze of colours, but it does show a very pleasant and simple formal setting for a small area. The borders are backed with hedges of Cupressus Lawsonians, the dark foliage of which gives contrast and emphasis to the delicacy of the flowers. The paths, constructed of herringbone brickets, are both colourful and durable. The back wall, of old bricks and stone coped with pantiles, is stepped down in three tiers and the severe lines and bare masonry of the terrace wall are broken by pockets with wall plants, and a wall fountain in the centre which feeds a small raised tank overflowing into a narrow lily pool.



An office desk designed by F. R. S. Yorke and made by Messrs. Edgeley.

THE NEW OFFICE FURNITURE

The desk, of which a perspective and elevations are given on this page, is framed in oak and finished in unstained oak veneer on laminated board. The drawer pulls are not applied, but, to facilitate dusting and to avoid sharp angles, are formed by undercutting the solid wood of the drawer front. These recesses were intended to be finished in the same colour as the other wood parts of the desk, but in this instance they have been painted black. The desk top is in black glass. Light chromium-plated tubular steel frames serve as legs, and raise the desk from the ground so that the floor is not obstructed. This arrangement provides room for the feet and makes cleaning easy. In making the desk Messrs. Edgeley decided to project the frames to the edge of the desk front. This variation from the original design was made in the belief that the public prefer chromium where they can see it.

GLASS AS A STRUCTURAL MATERIAL

One hears the present age spoken of as the "Glass and Steel Age." Undoubtedly in the modern building a very much more extensive use is being made of glass; in modern hospital and factory construction architects are evolving an entirely new form of fenestration, and even in domestic work there is little doubt that increasing attention will be paid to the window in future design. The Vitrea Drawn Sheet Glass Company have just published a small booklet dealing with the physical properties of window glass. The mechanical strength of glass windows is considered in relation to size, thickness, shape and safe resistance to wind pressures. The calculation of the heat loss through glass windows is dealt with, and also the possibility of utilizing the radiant heat from the sun in conjunction with thermostatic control, and some very useful data are given on the subject of the sound insulation properties of glass panels and the comparative value of single and double glazing. The author, J. R. I. Hepburn, D.Sc., Ph.D., surveys the subject with commendable thoroughness. Copies may be obtained from The Vitrea Company, at 52-54, High Holborn, W.C.1.

THE POWER OF STEAM

Anyone interested in the central heating of districts, hospitals, public buildings, churches, factories and so on, by means of hot water, thermal electric storage, oil, gas, coal and coke-fired boilers, or in the heating for industrial purposes by means of steam or

high temperature hot water, in the ventilation of all classes of buildings, the air-conditioning of industries, the dry-cooling of coke, or in heat storage plants, should apply to Messrs. Sulzer Brothers (London), Ltd., of 31, Bedford Square, London, W.C.1, for a copy of their new brochure in which all these matters are described in a text full of valuable practical data, and illustrated by a series of photographs, plans and informative diagrams reproduced in colour. The pleasure of the possession of a copy of this brochure will be two-fold: first for its practical value and interest, and secondly for its format and production, which are of an unusually high standard.

DOOR FURNITURE

Messrs. Henry Hope and Sons have recently published their Hardware Booklet, No. 136, which contains a selection of door fittings, and forms a supplement to their complete catalogue of locks, handles, bell pushes, finger plates, cabinet furniture, etc. Booklet No. 136 shows new designs for locks, escutcheons, centre knobs and ring handles, grip and push bar handles, lock plates and knobs, letter plates and knockers, and gives the sizes and prices of all the fittings. Copies of either, or both, of these catalogues can be obtained from Messrs. Hope, whose addresses are Smethwick, Birmingham, and 59, Berners Street, London, W.1.

ASSOCIATION OF ARTISTS IN COMMERCE

Many readers of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW may be glad to have these brief particulars concerning the Association of Artists in Commerce. The Association was inaugurated in 1932 in order to provide a recognized and representative body to which all artists engaged in commerce and industry might belong; and when it is realized that no less than 50,000 artists are earning their livelihood in various forms of commercial art and industrial design, the real need for such an organization becomes apparent.

The Association aims to co-ordinate the various interests represented in art in commerce, to strive for a fuller recognition of art as a factor of the greatest importance in trade and proper industrial developments; to protect and safeguard the interests of its members and to provide advice on all legal matters. Lectures and meetings will be held at regular and frequent intervals and periodically Exhibitions of Commercial and Industrial Art will be organized.

These are but a few of the advantages that such an association, efficiently organized, can offer to its members.

Philip Samuel, the honorary secretary, will be glad to forward further particulars to all interested. Communications should be addressed to him at 20, High Holborn, W.C.1. The membership fee for London members is £1 1s., for provincial members 5s.

Sydney Walton, C.B.E., is the President of the Association, and Henry G. Dowling, F.R.S.A., P.I.B.D., Hon.A.I.D., who was a member of Lord Gorell's Committee and is President of the Incorporated Institute of British Decorators, is the Association Chairman.

The Buildings Illustrated

The general contractors for the Howard Hall, at Braintree, Essex, designed by Sir John Burnet, Tait and Lorne, and D. G. Armstrong, F.I.A.A., were Messrs. A. G. Wicks, of Braintree. Among the artists, craftsmen and sub-contractors were the following:—Ames and Finnis (brick-facing), W. H. Collier & Co. (carcassing bricks), Firmacrete, Ltd. (artificial stone), Cocksedge & Co., Ltd. (structural steel), Diespeker & Co., Ltd. (floor tiles), Standard Flat Roofing Co., Ltd. (special roofings), Crittall and Winterton, Ltd. (central heating), Braintree & Bocking Gas Co., Ltd. (gas-fitting), East Anglian Electric Supply Co., Ltd. (electric wiring), Crittall Manufacturing Co., Ltd. (casements and entrance gates), E. W. Beckwith, Esq., and F. Crittall, Esq. (of Crittall Manufacturing Co., Ltd.) (furniture, chairs, desks, etc., to the Temple).

* * *

The Reinforced Concrete Engineers and Contractors for the Penguin Pool, Zoological Gardens, designed by Lubetkin, Drake and Tecton, were Messrs. J. L. Kier & Co., Ltd. Among the sub-contractors were the following: Burlington Slate Quarries, Ltd. (slates); Pilkington Bros., Ltd. (glass); North British Rubber Co., Ltd. (rubber); Williams and Williams, Ltd. (door furniture); Steelway, Ltd. (metalwork); Stic B. Paint Sales, Ltd., (special paint); United Strip and Bar Mills (steel reinforcement); Cement Marketing Co., Ltd. (cement).